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PLAY(S) IN THE WORKSHOP:

AN EXAMINATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS' (PLAYERS') ROLES IN THE NEW PLAY WORKSHOP

BY

©

WILLIAM R. KERR

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS.

DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA

Edmonton, Alberta
FALL 1995

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled PLAY(S) IN THE WORKSHOP: AN EXAMINATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS' (PLAYERS') ROLES IN THE NEW PLAY WORKSHOP submitted by WILLIAM R. KERR in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS.

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Diane E. Bessai
Dr. Diane Bessai

August 29, 1995

ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the roles of the individual participants (actors, designers, directors, dramaturgs, and playwrights) in the new play development (NPD) workshop process. This information was primarily gleaned from interviews with workshop participants (Jim DeFelice, Morris Ertman, Kathleen Flaherty, Liz Grieve, Blair Haynes, Stephen Heatley, Janet Hinton, David Mann, Conni Massing, Frank Moher, Greg Nelson, Val Pearson, Gerry Potter, Jan Selman, David Skelton, Ray Storey, and Daniel Van Heyst) about their experiences and most recent practices in NPD workshops in Edmonton.

Descriptive rather than prescriptive, the thesis offers a guide to fulfilling participant roles by exploring and exposing workshop structure without suggesting that the exposed structure creates strict rules for the workshop or the participants. The thesis looks for the the balance between free play and structured play that will enable the most creative and productive play and plays in the workshop.

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Additionally, I would like to thank all the professionals I interviewed without whom there would be no thesis: Jim DeFelice, Morris Ertman, Kathleen Flaherty, Liz Grieve, Blair Haynes, Stephen Heatley, Janet Hinton, David Mann, Conni Massing, Frank Moher, Greg Nelson, Val Pearson, Gerry Potter, Jan Selman, David Skelton, Ray Storey, and Daniel Van Heyst.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 1

Chapter One: The Dramaturg 29

Chapter Two: The Director 53

Chapter Three: The Playwright 75

Chapter Four: The Actor 116

Chapter Five: The Designer 147

Conclusion 176

Works Cited 204

Additional Bibliography 206

Appendix -- Biographies 209

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Participant Relationships 73

Introduction

> It's [the workshop is] different every time. Playwrights tend to be really different from one another. They have different feelings about the workshop process. They work differently and at different paces. [It] can vary from project to project for an individual playwright as well. (Gerry Potter)[1]

> It depends not only on the structure the organization normally uses, but also on what level the playwright is at. Where is he or she in writing the play and what will do them the most good? It's a very personal thing. (Kathleen Flaherty)

> The workshop should be a very flexible thing. It should be difficult to define. It should be loosely defined as an examination of the existing material in hopes of one day finding how it's going to become a play. How you do that, who does that, and when that is done, can only be defined in accordance to the needs of the particular writer at the particular stage of their career. (Ray Storey)

> Every workshop is structured differently: depending on the play, depending on the time, depending on the stage of the play. (Liz Grieve)

> The workshop has to be suited to the individual play and the individual playwright. (Greg Nelson)

Virtually everyone to whom I spoke stressed the unique quality necessary for each workshop. Given this near-unanimity of opinion on keeping the workshop process open and undefined, why would anyone try to define it? Why would I?

---

[1] All these quotations are from my interviews with theatre professionals who work or have worked in new play development and particularly the workshop in Edmonton. I interviewed director/dramaturgs Jim DeFelice, Kathleen Flaherty, Stephen Heatley, Gerry Potter, and Jan Selman, and dramaturg Liz Grieve; playwrights Janet Hinton, Conni Massing, Frank Moher, Greg Nelson, and Ray Storey; actors Blair Haynes, David Mann, and Val Pearson; designers Morris Ertman, David Skelton, and Daniel Van Heyst. For biographical information on these practitioners, please see the appendix on pages 209-214.

Originally my desire to define the structure of the workshop arose from a personal workshop experience as an actor, before I came to Edmonton. It failed miserably due to a lack of definition. The director, using his authority in the theatre, told everyone what to do, to no particular purpose -- it seemed that he had not prepared and was improvising to no particular end. No one else seemed to have either the authority or knowledge to challenge his actions. Since it was my first workshop, I certainly had no idea of what should happen. It seemed to me that if the rest of the participants knew what was appropriate, someone could at least have asked for an explanation of this particular deviation.

This experience made me think more generally about the dominance of the workshop as a New Play Development (NPD) tool. I thought that a process so prevalent needed definition in order to allow more practitioners to understand and to use the structure in the way that they intended to improve the play. I was sure that most practitioners had the best of intentions, but it seemed that the best of intentions was not enough.

As in a family, the participants seem to need both the best of intentions and a knowledge of process or they will spoil the child. Without theories of parenting, parents might be doomed to repeat mistakes of which they were unaware, or, conversely, reinvent the wheel in each successful case. However, at the same time, all theories must be modified to fit each individual case -- each individual child -- at that particular time. Perhaps the same is true of the workshop.

Most participants in the workshop process, like those quoted at the beginning, believe that all workshops, like all children, are to some extent unique, depending upon the given circumstances of the world of the play and the stage of development of both the play and the playwright. Perhaps the ultimate common ground among these diverse participants is their desire to create unique workshops. Establishing a common territory of language and technique, as I am attempting to do, might help create uniqueness by providing a structure that can be altered. Once you know the rules of the game, you can break them.

As Gordon Slethaug notes, discussion of theatre as a game has continued and developed since Plato and Aristotle.

(64-9) Plato distinguishes between unstructured play and structured games generally in society and particularly in theatre, favouring the structured play of games. Aristotle's Poetics could be described, among other things, as a "rule book" for theatre. More recent theories of game include Derrida's advocacy of free play that disrupts normal structures over games which confine play within normative structures. Certainly in theatre over the past century, many of the myriad movements that have evolved have done so as new forms of play that reject the rules or structures of their predecessors. Since a part of the movement of this century has been a rejection of rules in favour of creative play in the theatre and the other arts, the resistance of theatre practitioners to a definition or to a confining structure is understandable.

However, Foucault's words on writing could easily be applied to theatre: "Writing unfolds like a game that inevitably moves beyond its own rules and finally leaves them behind." (qtd in Slethaug 67) Foucault believes that breaks in traditional structures come from within the game when particular rules are exposed and/or exceeded. Testing the limits of a current structure, like language or theatre, allows for new variations of, or growth in, that structure. Gordon Slethaug cites R. Rawdon Wilson's recent theory on game that compares literature to a game, but one in which "conventions and strategies...are not enforceable and the goals are not consistent." (69) Applying a similar view to theatre, one could acknowledge the importance of game or structure and simultaneously the non-restrictive natures of these games or structures that allow free play. Perhaps finding and/or acknowledging the balance between game and play in the creation of new theatre, and in the workshop in particular, would assist the development process.

Considering the structure of the new play workshop in particular, perhaps a better understanding and exposure of the rules or structure will lead to more fruitful creative play and plays. In discussing their use of and their role in the workshop process, Conni Massing warns others not to play the wrong game, while Daniel Van Heyst wants all the others to participate or play equally in the game. Their language betrays an inability to completely reject structure. Even if the workshop eludes precise definition, the players can at least tell there is a game, roles for players to play, and what the rules are not. Whether the players want to acknowledge it or not, a structure or game with rules of some kind exists within the workshop process. I intend to try and expose these rules or that structure in order to attempt to understand what happens in the process and in order to create a "rule book" that will allow for a more precise adherence to, avoidance, or rejection of the rules or structure.

There have been previous attempts to describe the structure or to give a general working model of the workshop by people such as Per Brask, Kathleen Flaherty, Paul Leonard, and Jan Selman. In _Canadian Theatre Review_'s (_CTR_'S) NPD issue (#49, Winter 1986), Brask, Selman, and Leonard all give their views. Brask describes a good workshop model:

> Basically...a good workshop will give the playwright, actors, director, and dramaturg sufficient time to deal with the play and its properties -- _in depth_. During such a workshop the actors and the director essentially become "tools" for the playwright and the dramaturg.... In a good workshop the actors and director will do what they do best, namely execute the actions of the characters and be responsible for a coherent staging of the manuscript as the playwright and the dramaturg incorporate the information thus derived into the further development of the play...in order to enhance the theatrical realization of the world according to the playwright. (13)

Selman goes into more detail, but aside from noting the frequency of one person as director/dramaturg, the relationships and responsibilities of the participants are much the same. She emphasizes the importance of setting goals in pre-workshop meetings between the director/dramaturg and playwright, guided by the playwright. During the workshop, Selman also feels that the actors and directors must work together to do readings, stand-up scenes, and perhaps improvise around scenes. In addition, she focuses on making discussion in the workshop useful to the play and the playwright and particularly notes the need for effective chairing by the director. Leonard notes the lack of a designer in the process, and believes therefore that the process privileges the development of literary plays.

Several years later, in a 1992 CTR issue, Kathleen Flaherty gives a detailed model of a typical workshop reminiscent of both Brask's and Selman's models. She states that most practitioners and organizations structure the typical workshop process by focusing on "the role of each participant, a kind of division of labour: the director deals with the actors; the actors interact with the playwright in formal scheduled sessions; the dramaturge is concerned largely with the structure and flow of the play; the actors are concerned with the development of character and getting from one moment to another in the script." ("Table Stakes: Gambling With New Play Development" 28) In addition, she notes that a decision must be made about having or not having a public reading, and that if there is to be a reading then time may be spent giving a shape to that reading. Like Leonard, she also stresses that the absence of a designer as one of the participants favours the development of word-centred texts.

The use of the workshop in Edmonton, and particularly at Theatre Network and Workshop West, follows the same general pattern as the models above. However, in Edmonton, quite frequently there has been an inclusion of the designer in the process. In such cases, the designer, like the director and actors, generally does his or her normal work with a text. The designer may also take part in the planning of the workshop and add visual materials and presentations to discussions and readings or stagings within the workshop. Thus, as a starting point, I will begin my examination of the workshop process by using the above general models, with the addition of the designer, as a template.

I also intend to go into greater detail about the workshop. Since my examination of the process springs from interviewing seventeen practitioners who have been involved in workshops, I will devote a chapter to each participant's role, and use more viewpoints of the process. I hope to expose more of the structure of the workshop process by this detailed, many-sided investigation.

However, before I can continue, I must address the fact that Flaherty outlined her model, not as a guide to a good workshop, but as an example of what she sees as a standard workshop process that limits NPD. She believes, "Most theatre companies have standardized their workshop processes. Most of these are remarkably similar and few of them include considerations of the needs of the play in question." ("Table Stakes" 28) How does the belief expressed by the five workshop participants -- quoted at the beginning and including Flaherty herself -- that all plays need the differing approaches allowed by the flexibility of the workshop, square with Flaherty's views about the standardization of the workshop? She agrees that each play has unique needs and thinks that the standardized process created by a standardized structure has created, despite the best of intentions, plays with a certain "sameness or lack of excitement." ("Table Stakes" 28) Given this concern about standardized structure and uniqueness, I became concerned that my search for a "definition" or structure for the workshop might contribute to a limiting of NPD by increasing standardization through my definition.

Flaherty also outlines some of the reasons for the development of a standardized process:

> We want to avoid re-inventing the wheel and to save valuable time....Most people would cite financial constraints as the major limiting factor in new play development. The standardization of process means we don't have to expend the time and energy to question our philosophical and aesthetic biases before getting down to business. ("Table Stakes" 28)

She further believes that limited time and money have contributed to, "a predilection for naturalism" as the product of this process because it is a form in which most participants have training and of which most have an understanding. Flaherty emphasized this point in both her 1989 and 1992 articles on NPD, as well as during my interview with her in December 1993. She further argues that the lack of a designer as a participant, and the focus on the script as words and not as a blueprint for a theatre event, has led to increased blandness by limiting the theatrical options and by privileging naturalism as the form most easily understood on the page rather than the stage: "If the play doesn't work on the level of the naked word, then it is unlikely to be workshopped in the first place; if it is workshopped, the non-verbal elements will be left to the imagination or read as stage directions." ("Table Stakes" 30)

Flaherty's concerns both undermined and stimulated my desire to do this project. If she is right, that standardized structure creates a process that produces standardized plays, I do not want to foster that process by more precisely delineating that structure. However, as Janet Hinton said in my interview with her about the script in the workshop process: "[be] careful not to throw out the baby with the bath water." Should we not also be careful about throwing out the standard process for developing scripts? Flaherty also acknowledges the value of many of the workshops in which she has been involved, but she wants the participants to "monitor those biases which actually represent a system ensuring its own survival....If we don't ask ourselves the questions about the influence of systemic biases on our work, we will only perpetuate them unwittingly." ("Table Stakes" 31) She then asks the questions: "Can we change the systems? Do we want to?...What can I do about it?" ("Table Stakes" 31) I believe that I can use my precise examination to expose that structure and therefore foster a "witting" rather than unwitting knowledge that will allow participants to manipulate rather than be manipulated by the structure. Therefore, I intend to proceed by providing a detailed "snapshot[2]" of the new play workshop in Edmonton in 1993 as part of my attempt to "do something about it."

Before I proceed with that snapshot, in order to put it in context, I will next briefly summarize the history of the process in Edmonton up to now and compare this new play development process with other types of NPD processes. As I am preparing this thesis at the University of Alberta Department of Drama, and the Department is connected to the origins and development of the new play workshop in

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[2] I use the term snapshot to denote the moment in time that I am examining and to imply the development leading up to this point and the continued movement after. However, in breadth of material the thesis could be seen as a "documentary" or "documentary snapshot."

Edmonton, it is perhaps particularly fitting that I examine the evolution of the workshop to the present "snapshot."

In 1978, the University of Alberta sent Frank Moher to the U.S. National Playwright's Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theatre Centre in Waterford, Connecticut. The O'Neill conference, begun in 1965, is widely seen as one of the originators of the workshop process in developing new plays in North America. According to Moher, he came back to Edmonton and used his experience at the O'Neill to establish a formal process for developing plays while working with Mark Schoenberg at Theatre 3. He continued to develop the process at Northern Light Theatre, which established ties with Alberta Theatre Projects (ATP) in Calgary, and there the process developed into ATP's playRites festival. Meanwhile, in Edmonton, the development of new plays and the new play workshop took place primarily at Workshop West Theatre (WW) under the direction of Gerry Potter and at Theatre Network (TN) under the direction of Stephen Heatley. The University of Alberta Department of Drama remained an influence, since both Potter and Heatley trained as directors in the Department and Professors Jim DeFelice and Jan Selman[3] continued to take an active role in NPD and the workshop process.

---

[3] Selman first trained at the Department and then worked professionally in NPD in Edmonton in the 1970s and 1980s before becoming a professor in 1988.

More generally, in Canada, workshops began to develop with the founding of Montreal Playwrights Workshop in 1963 and Vancouver's New Play Centre in 1970. The Banff Playwrights' Colony, also influenced by the O'Neill Centre, began in 1974. However, John Lazarus notes:

> There is some indication that the dramaturgical game with the oddly funky name of "workshop" is one that has always been with us. When I started attending workshops some years ago at Vancouver's New Play Centre, I assumed that they were a recent West Coast innovation. Later I would get into arguments with writers from other cities who also claimed to have been first....But the workshop is older than any of us. Most great playwrights through history were affiliated with working companies, which suggest[s] that they didn't just hang out, but worked in ways that probably resembled the workshops we have now. (27)

Yet Peter Hay believes that the workshop only brings the playwright halfway back into this historical process. (19)

Workshop West was founded by Potter in 1978 with a mandate to produce and develop Canadian plays and playwrights. Potter increasingly tried to reintegrate the playwright into the working theatre. One method of achieving this goal was to use associate artists such as designers, composers, and choreographers in the workshop process, as well as actors and a director and a dramaturg or a director/dramaturg. About 1981, he stopped having public readings, because he found the pressure to perform too great a distraction. Potter calls the six-month period in 1985 in which he began, "to realize [his] long-term goals...in exploring the collaborative nature of theatre" (DeFelice 53)[4] the most productive of his entire tenure.

During this period, an:

> ensemble of actors, writers, designers, and musicians...set out to explore a number of ways of creating scripts and to introduce actors and playwrights to collective creation, to collaborative adaptations of prose texts, to actor improvisations and exercises as a springboard for the playwright's work. As well, the Ensemble participated in more orthodox play readings and workshops." (DeFelice 53-4)

Potter was particularly pleased that this period developed plays, playwrights and the skills of the other participants to work on new plays. Blair Haynes, a member of the Ensemble, comments that such "developmental workshops are better for the actor, because you carry the work over a long period of time....You can really get at it." Haynes goes on to note that he, like many other workshop participants in Edmonton, has primarily worked on new plays at WW and TN and has consequently been primarily influenced by Potter and Heatley. Frank Moher also liked this period at WW, but notes how time-consuming and expensive the process was.

This intense method of NPD did not continue at WW, but Potter's concern with a "'sensuous' approach" (DeFelice 53) did, as he continued to work with designers as part of the workshop process. Finally, from 1985 forward, Potter became more and more interested in workshops leading to production rather than only for development. He found that development workshops could get too abstract and that production workshops gave all the participants higher stakes, which led to more honest interactions.

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[4]. This is described in detail in DeFelice's article "Manifold Delights."

Theatre Network began as a collective and moved more into NPD workshops under the guidance of Heatley. In the beginning Heatley was absolutely convinced of the playwright's centrality in the process, and he remains committed to the idea, but he gradually moved to the belief that the workshop should be more of a collaboration. A dramaturg who worked with Heatley, Liz Grieve, describes the beginnings of this process: "It really depended. There was no prototype to follow. We made it up play by play and as we went through the process several times over we realized that there were some things that worked and some things that didn't." At this time there were no designers in the process, notes Grieve. Over the years, the designer became integral to many workshops at TN. In particular, Daniel Van Heyst worked on many workshops and developed a process he called "visual dramaturgy." Also in later years, from 1989-1993 Theatre Network's NEWRITES festival, similar to ATP's playRites, emerged as an attempt to give closer to production experiences to the playwright without doing a full production.

The use of the workshop in Edmonton followed the general use in Canada. Moher notes that initially there was a great need for workshops but that a period of too much emphasis on workshops followed. Betty Jane Wylie writes in her 1986 article that playwrights have no choice, and that they have to have a workshop whether they want it or not. (24) This is countered in Edmonton as WW and TN allow playwrights like Stewart Lemoine, Ray Storey, and Brad Fraser to run their own workshops, or to choose not to have any workshops. Pamela Hawthorne of Vancouver's New Play Centre argues in a 1987 issue of CTR that she had spent the previous twenty years promoting workshops, but because of the proliferation and misuse of the workshop, she will probably have to spend the next twenty years trying to get rid of workshops. ("The Directors' Colloquium at Calgary: 2/ Panel Session One: 16 May 1987: The Role of the Director in New Play Development" 12) In a 1990 issue of CTR, Malcolm Page summarizes the shifts in the use of workshops:

> In the 70s excessive faith was placed in workshops. By the early 80s I heard of plays "workshopped to death"....Workshops are now seen in perspective, but services are available erratically in a hit-and-miss way. (76)

Along with the use of the workshop went the ability of the participants to use the workshop: Hawthorne's stance is an opposition to the misuse of the workshop. In the same 1987 CTR issue, Bob White notes, "there are too many people doing workshops who don't know what they're doing and therefore, playwrights are getting hurt." ("Directors' Colloquium" 12) Heatley adds that the problem in the 1970s was that people both tried to be experts in other roles, i.e. actors as dramaturgs, and that people tried to be experts before they really knew the play:

> You engage with the play based on what you're skilled at, and therefore you begin to know the play. I think that the problems that existed in the seventies when workshopping was madness in Canada [were based on] the fact that people played expert when they didn't have any right to be -- not that they didn't know things, it's just that they didn't know the work. (Heatley)

Grieve adds that she believes that the process is getting better as the participants more and more know both their roles and others' roles in the workshop.

At the same time, other types of NPD were developing both in Canada as a whole and in Edmonton in particular. One of the major early new play development methods practiced in Edmonton and across Canada was the process of collective creation in which all participants, mostly actors, jointly created plays. Theatre Passe Muraille and Paul Thompson in particular practiced this method in Canada, while Theatre Network in particular practiced this method in Edmonton.

Workshops and collectives developed independently, but have come together for projects like the development of

Frank Moher's Odd Jobs at Catalyst Theatre and the Ensemble at WW. The method practiced is akin to the one Caryl Churchill has used with companies such as Joint Stock in England in which actors and director research and improvise around scenarios as with any collective and then the playwright uses this material to write the script. In turn, the method used at Joint Stock grew out of Joan Littlewood's work in the 1950's with Theatre Workshop at the Theatre Royal Stratford East. George Luscombe, who worked with Littlewood, brought these techniques to Canada in 1959 when he founded Toronto Workshop Productions. Moher considers this an under-used process in Western Canadian theatre. More recently, TN worked this way with Conni Massing in adapting the book Aberhart Summer, but financial constraints prevented the theatre from producing it.

Another increasingly popular method, somewhat similar to the method above, is the RSVP cycle practiced and promulgated in Canada mainly by Robert Lepage. In this method, the company improvises around certain resources (R), often physical or visual, then scores (S) or arranges the improvised scenes, then revises (V) the scenes in that order, then performs (P) the material, and then uses the performance as the resource in another cycle. Companies like Theatre of the New Heart are embracing this method in Edmonton. This method focuses more on the theatrical, especially the visual. Some of the work done during the Ensemble period at WW resembles this method. In addition the recent adaptation of Troilus and Cressida as Cressida at WW involved parts of both of the above methods as the writers, Gerry Potter and Vern Thiessen, scripted material from improvised scenes, and the actors, designer, and choreographer improvised movement around resource materials.

Sky Gilbert at Buddies in Bad Times in Toronto pioneered another type of play, but primarily playwright, development process with the Rhubarb! Festival. Short mini-plays, often alternative plays are produced in a festival setting. The writer is seen as a creator of a theatre event, and production, not development, is the goal. The individual or group of creators are developed in the theatre by doing productions and can choose to continue or not continue with the particular piece. In Edmonton, the "Write on the Edge" and "Loud and Queer" cabarets at Catalyst Theatre are examples of this type of work.[5] At Catalyst they are primarily used to develop new playwrights and give potential playwrights with little theatre experience access to theatre.

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[5] "Fourplay" at Catalyst, in which four plays are created from the ground up in one day, probably does not fit into this category, since it celebrates the creation of theatre using experienced professionals. There is simply not enough time to develop either the play or the playwright. However, plays could have their genesis here as well.

However, the main alternative to the workshop for developing new plays in Edmonton is not a method but a movement -- the Edmonton Fringe. Many playwrights and companies without playwrights have developed their craft by producing low-budget creations at the Fringe, and learning from these productions under fire. In addition, plays developed by individual playwrights working alone or in workshops, collectives, workshop/collective hybrids, and with the RSVP cycle have all used the Fringe as their performance venue. For example, Edmonton playwrights Stewart Lemoine and Kenneth Brown have honed their craft primarily by writing plays and producing them at the Fringe.

Whatever method is used, the playwright and play need to find the right method of development for their particular needs. With all methods there is an underlying assumption that the method contributes to the development of new work. In the workshop process in particular, participants generally assume that:

> Play workshops desire nothing less than to assist playwrights to finish their plays with optimum art and production potential. Not to mention forwarding the cause of Canadian theatre toward its goal of new work of import and excellence. (Flaherty, "Where's the Thrust" 22)

Potter adds that despite the best intentions, workshops may do more harm than good if the participants do not examine their assumptions about the process:

> If you're designing a workshop, you try to start with a real basic question: Will this help the play or the playwright in some way to do this? And [you try to] not assume that generically it will. It's a tool that might be useful. I probably fall into it too, and the playwrights too. The workshopping process can also be a way of avoiding dealing with things. (Potter)

According to Potter, the workshop can become like an automatic machine if the participants do not conduct this examination. Specifically, Potter outlines four assumptions generally made about workshops, that the participants, particularly the director, playwright, and dramaturg, should reexamine prior to a workshop:

First Assumption:	the play is in process, changeable.
Second Assumption:	the playwright is willing and able to change - rewrite.
Third Assumption:	the work done will be useful to the playwright.
Fourth Assumption:	the talking in the workshop will be useful to the playwright.

> These help determine:
> a) if you will do a workshop.
> b) how you will design the workshop. (Potter)

If the first two assumptions are not true about a particular play, then the play probably should not be workshopped. If the third and fourth assumptions are not true, then the play should be workshopped in a particular way. Once examined, these assumptions can become criteria for building successful workshops. Potter adds that not all writers need workshops and many are good playwrights without them. Playwright Ray Storey agrees: "I don't think you have to have one. I don't think that it's a necessary evil. I think if it doesn't work for you, you shouldn't have it." As well, some playwrights become workshop-reliant, while others quickly graduate from the process.

In addition, organizational agendas and structures often conflict with the needs of individual plays. Frank Moher, Kathleen Flaherty, and Greg Nelson emphasize the potential conflict between the play's needs and the workshopping organization's structures. Flaherty accepts the reasons, usually financial, for these structures, but stresses the need to negotiate an acceptable compromise. Paul Mears of Vancouver's New Play Centre notes that, "What is important...is to recognize that we are not slaves to the structure....The programs are tools, as are we, for the writer to employ. We need to allow for the different working methods of different writers. It is far too easy to be presumptuous about the value of a 'workshop'." ("Smart Dramaturges" 7)

Similarly, Potter emphasizes the importance of the playwright as the centre of the process controlling how the workshop will be used, although he will negotiate with the playwright about the use of the workshop. Per Brask underlines the importance of the playwright at the centre by citing the danger of bad workshops in which the director controls the process to such an extent that "the playwright finally deliver[s] the play that the director want[s] written, a play manifesting the world according to the director." (14) On the other hand, in a reply to Sky Gilbert's condemnation of the dramaturg and workshop ("Opinion" 8-10), Michael Devine warns against anyone, including the playwright, indulging in "'fascistic' theatre [in which]...one person's vision dominates at the expense of all meaningful collaboration." (8)

Frank Moher, David Mann, and Liz Grieve also emphasize the necessity for consideration of the play's needs and the appropriateness of the workshop for individual plays. Moher warns against good plays being destroyed by an inappropriate structure while Grieve cautions against plays being workshopped into mediocrity. As a particular example, Mann comments that ambiguous plays often require an entire rehearsal process of exploration, and therefore the workshop can be inadequate. Both Kathleen Flaherty and Jim DeFelice recognize that certain things cannot be discovered in workshops, and can only be seen in three dimensions when a play is on its feet. Flaherty adds that non-linear plays in particular need a different type of development tool.

Potter also emphasizes using the workshop to bring the writer back into the centre of the theatre process rather than writing separately:

> I have a distrust of certain concepts of what a playwright is, and what a playwright does, that I think are sometimes inimical to the process of actually getting a play on. Concepts that tend to be literary and romantic, that view the playwright's function as primarily a literary one separate from the theatre, working in the garret somewhere. I think that a more useful concept of the playwright's function is that they are actually creators of theatrical events, not just writers of words. (Potter)

Robert Benedetti, like John Lazarus, notes the historical relation of the playwright with particular companies that kept the playwright at the centre of the play development process by keeping them involved in a theatrical collaboration. ("Director's Colloquium" 9-10) Bob White asks, "Are we going to put [playwrights] on the bus going from one workshop to another? They have to be a part of the company. They cannot survive in a garret somewhere slipping pages under your door." ("Director's Colloquium" 10) Potter and Heatley tend to do workshops leading up to production that associate the playwright at least temporarily with a particular company.

White ("Director's Colloquium" 9) and Potter, as well as Elliott Hayes (36-9), also warn of the dangers of the "workshop ghetto" as plays can be workshopped again and again across the country without being produced. Potter adds that continuous workshopping without the right goals, structures, and abilities can lead nowhere: "Sometimes people have brought scripts to me after they've been through three or four workshops somewhere else. Sometimes I've been shocked at what I see as huge, glaring problems structurally that nobody has addressed in the previous workshops." (Potter) In addition, this switching from place to place can result in confusing and contradictory advice for the playwright, which is another reason to try and keep the playwright attached to a particular company. Ray Storey also worries about the effects of a "workshop industry" on new plays: "There is a huge workshop industry out there that I have reservations about because plays are being developed for the sake of developing new plays, and sometimes I think that the workshop accelerates a play onto the stage before its time." (Storey)

Debate about the proper use of the workshop as a tool to help develop plays and playwrights has continued for years. Concerns that workshops produce similar bland plays with biases towards naturalism, and towards written text over theatre events, were debated in CTR's NPD issue in 1986 and continue to be discussed in CTR articles by Malcolm Page in 1990 and Kathleen Flaherty in 1992. In my interviews with workshop participants these issues were raised again. More generally, concerns about the roles of the participants in the workshop have continued. In 1986 John Lazarus wrote, "Workshops are now an accepted institution...yet it seems rare for anyone to discuss how best to benefit from the workshops. There is this assumption that everybody knows what the ground rules are. But in fact everybody does not." (27)

The same concern helped prompt me in 1993 to undertake this thesis. In an attempt to discover or illumine these ground rules, I decided to begin with one common element -- the community of committed NPD theatre professionals in Edmonton, which includes Jim DeFelice, Morris Ertman, Kathleen Flaherty, Liz Grieve, Blair Haynes, Stephen Heatley, Janet Hinton, David Mann, Conni Massing, Frank Moher, Greg Nelson, Val Pearson, Gerry Potter, Jan Selman, David Skelton, Ray Storey, and Daniel Van Heyst.

Acting as a scribe, which is sometimes part of a dramaturg's role, I recorded and I will summarize the comments of the directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, actors and designers listed above, searching their responses for the common working methods and skills used by these artists. Since I will be looking for answers derived from a diverse group of theatre practitioners, perhaps my "theoretical" methods will not be too far removed from the methods practiced in the workshop process. Specifically, I asked each participant what he or she should do to fulfill his or her role in the workshop, and what the other participants should do to fulfill their roles. I then separated the answers into five chapters: dramaturgs, directors, playwrights, actors, and designers. To further subdivide the structure, I asked each participant what skills and attitudes he or she needed, what they needed from the other participants, and what he or she did at each stage of the workshop, then organized the chapters accordingly. Each chapter contains an initial introduction and "discussion." In the "discussions," near the beginning of each chapter, I have taken quotations from my interviews with the participants, or players, and arranged them so the players seem to discuss the particular participant role that is the subject of each individual chapter. This is followed by an examination of the skills and attitudes required to play that role, followed by a look at the participants or "players" roles prior to, during, and after the workshop. Finally, each chapter ends with a summary of the needs the particular player has of each of the other roles in the process.

I recognize the artificiality of completely separating one role from another and one phase from another, especially as many of the participants who I interviewed do play or have played more than one role. However, I am trying to identify the different functions and phases within the workshop in order to reveal the structure, not to prescribe separate roles and phases. Like the play in the workshop process, I realize that my work must be seen as a "work in progress" that may capture some but not all of the elements of a still-evolving form.

Some NPD practitioners noted the benefits of structure. Frank Moher believes that restrictions are helpful as long as they are not too confining. Kathleen Flaherty, who is very concerned about using standardized workshop structure, states that she is "not suggesting that we remove all frameworks only that we acknowledge them and understand that a framework leaves out things as it includes others." ("Thrust" 22) Even Sky Gilbert, hardly a supporter of traditional structures in dramaturgy and workshops, states that "to discover what experimental theatre is, we must define theatre first of all." ("Rhubarb!" 40) At least some structure should be defined, exposed, and put in place as a framework before creative play can begin.

Chapter One: The Dramaturg

> There's a dramaturg and what the hell is that person doing? And where are they? And what is their [the dramaturg's] relationship to them [the actors in a workshop]? (Flaherty)

The dramaturg plays an important role in NPD and in workshops. Or do they? What do they do anyway? The dramaturgical role in NPD in Canada has been debated since its inception. Sky Gilbert's article on "stupid dramaturgy" ("Opinion" 8-10), and Michael Devine's response on "user-friendly dramaturgy" (8-9) in Canplay, delineate the opposite ends of the spectrum of opinion about dramaturgs, as well as illustrate the absence of a concise definition. In CTR's issue focusing on NPD in Canada, Per Brask suggests that anti-intellectualism in the theatre profession in Canada has led to and perpetuates a failure to understand the dramaturg's function. Kathleen Flaherty echoes this opinion by suggesting that "there are 'gazillions' of bad dramaturgs in this country, [and that] a distrust of academia has led to a lack of discussion about 'what it is that dramaturgs do?'" However, also in CTR's NPD issue, Urjo Kareda cites not defining dramaturgy and the dramaturg's function as a strength that allows different needs to be fulfilled.[6]

I am beginning my exploration of the workshop with the dramaturgical role, because the debate over the dramaturg mirrors the debate over the workshop: from range of opinion to difficulty with definition, and possible strengths of non-definition. I will attempt to define this player in the Edmonton new play workshop by using the voices of the Edmonton theatre professionals I have interviewed, and in particular those with substantial dramaturgical experience: Gerry Potter, Stephen Heatley, Jan Selman, Jim DeFelice, Kathleen Flaherty, Liz Grieve, and a playwright/dramaturg -- Frank Moher.

POTTER: The dramaturge's function might be more to really focus in on what the playwright's needs are, as defined by the playwright and by the dramaturge, and ask such questions of the group or of the director as may be necessary to fulfill those needs -- to kind of keep tuned in to where the playwright is in the workshop itself and how they are dealing with the workshop, how they are approaching it, and try to help them get something positive out of the workshop.

HEATLEY: Because key to the whole process is the playwright feeling like they're being served. Because if they don't feel like they're being served they're unlikely to be able to hear what is being offered them. So the empowerment of the playwright is an essential part of the process.

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[6] For an in depth examination of the dramaturg's role in English Canadian theatre see "New Play Development in English Canada, 1970-1990: Defining the Dramaturgical Role," an MA Thesis by Deborah Tihanyi done at the University of Alberta Department of Drama in 1994. The thesis contains interviews with Per Brask, Pamela Hawthorne, Urjo Kareda, D.D. Kugler, Kim McCaw, Judith Rudakoff, Jace van der Veen, Bob White, and Svetlana Zylin concerning their roles in and opinions of play development in Canada and the dramaturg's role. In particular, see comments by White, Kareda, Rudakoff, and Kugler on the workshop (25-27).

FLAHERTY: The onus of the workshop's communication in the moment is on the director, but the onus of the whole workshop, I feel, is on the dramaturge, because it's for the playwright and the dramaturge is the one who has the closest relationship [to the playwright]. You [as dramaturge] have to monitor things very carefully.

GRIEVE: I felt very strongly [that] I was there to serve the play and the playwright, and the play as the playwright intended it to be.

SELMAN: My work before anything else is just doing my homework to know the play as deeply as I possibly can. My job is also to really hear the playwright very closely: where she thinks she is, what she thinks she needs, what she thinks this draft is about or for or has accomplished, what questions she's got.

NELSON: You want [a dramaturg] who is willing to invest enough time in you and the play to really get a sense of what the "mythical end product" is going to be, and then...

DEFELICE: [You don't want] someone who is trying to impose a set of ideas onto a work, try[ing] to reshape the play in their own image.

POTTER: We don't use dramaturgs per se. We don't use people who call themselves dramaturgs but don't have experience in other areas of theatre. My distrust has been of people who are purely coming at things from the theoretical, academic, literary perspective. [They would] have to show me that they really knew their stuff. [It's] really easy to get the playwright's back up with someone who's just approaching it from a theoretical perspective.

HEATLEY: It's the dramaturge who is, who should be, the buddy of the playwright.

MASSING: [Yes.] The role of the dramaturge in the simplest possible way is to be the playwright's buddy, someone for the playwright to confer with, an ally.

MOHER: The dramaturg is the playwright's best friend in an adversarial process -- everyone else is there to find out what's wrong with the play....The most important role of the dramaturg is to take the playwright out for a beer.

DEFELICE: At the same time, if the dramaturg gets too close to the playwright as an ally, the dramaturg can, through a kind of loyalty, possibly not effectively see something in the play that could be changed to the benefit of the play. Objectivity is very important at all times.

MANN: The dramaturge should be, at the same time, the most nurturing and the toughest because they have to be very supportive and positive about the play, yet they're the one who has to be the friend to the playwright, the bosom buddy who can tell you when you're wrong.

HEATLEY: [It's] like being a stage manager in a sense. If you want to be the centre of attention don't be a stage manager, don't be a dramaturge. All the rest of us are putting our stamp on things in a somewhat visible way. The dramaturge is somebody who functions underneath all that. It's really hard to look at a play and say that was well dramaturged or that was well stage managed.

SELMAN: What I like about being dramaturge only is I almost more purely, clearly can just think about what does this playwright really need here.

GRIEVE: A workshop dramaturge is the same [as an editor]. The only difference is the dramaturge is bringing a play to production, the editor is bringing a book to publication. It would be similar to a substantive editor where you're editing for content not for commas.

PEARSON: The dramaturge [is] there to protect the integrity of the text, the integrity of the original intent. They are the wordsmith as opposed to the interpreter.

POTTER: I think that a dramaturg has to work intuitively too. There's a lot of art in dramaturgy as well as science.

MANN: [You want] someone who is open to different playwrights' styles of writing and styles of work so that they can try and absorb that and become a conduit for that.

MOHER: [Either the dramaturg should] figure out the individual play's set of rules and how it plays by them [or] at some point the rules by which a play operates become clear and then [the dramaturg should] help the

> playwright live by those rules. It's most exciting when they're brand new rules. It's analogous to good teaching: leading people to their own personal discovery.

Judging by this "discussion," it is hard to agree on the spelling and pronunciation of the term, let alone the definition, yet there seem to be many common elements. Probably most would agree that the dramaturg (hereafter referred to as dramaturg, not dramaturge) should serve the play and the playwright by knowing the work and being a friend, while maintaining an objectivity that will allow the dramaturg to monitor the workshop so that the playwright and the play derive the maximum possible benefit from the workshop. In order to do this, the dramaturg should remove him or herself, and act as a secondary rather than a primary artist underneath the others' work. Having let the voices "speak directly" on the dramaturg's function, I will now summarize directly the different views on the skills and attitudes needed by a dramaturg to be applied prior to, during, and after a workshop.

Many players voice concerns on the attitudes the dramaturg specifically should bring to the play, the playwright, and the workshop. Heatley, Flaherty, Van Heyst and Hinton all note as essential a love of, belief in, or commitment to the play and the playwright. Flaherty further adds that the dramaturg must believe that "she [the dramaturg] understands what's required." As Flaherty says, "the dramaturge should assume the play works, and that they're here [in the workshop] to make it work better." Heatley notes that a "dramaturg who wants to be a dramaturg" serves the process well. Heatley, as well as Flaherty and Grieve, suggests that self-effacement will allow dramaturgs to do their job more effectively. This quality, along with the lack of desire to do someone else's job -- notably the playwright's -- helps the dramaturg communicate to the playwright through offering unforced opinions, as Potter, Nelson, and Ertman all indicate. Finally, Potter, DeFelice, and Flaherty (all dramaturgs) all state that you must tell your own political, moral, intellectual, and aesthetic biases to the playwright. As Potter notes, the playwright then knows where opinions might come from and can accept or reject input accordingly. This helps nurture the feeling -- that should be encouraged throughout the process -- that the playwright is "driving" and in control of the play. DeFelice suggests that you can try to work on a play you do not agree with by understanding it, and distancing your negative personal reactions, but Flaherty believes that if your bias is different then quit.

Of course these statements on bias assume that the participants will be aware of all their own biases. My belief or bias is that no one can be aware of all their own biases. Perhaps the players should be as open as possible to discovering and acknowledging other biases that surface during the workshop. Nonetheless undiscovered biases will remain and function, but any the participant knows, or becomes aware of, should be revealed.

Along with these attitudes, the participants cite an extensive list of skills needed by the dramaturg. The two most often mentioned are the ability to understand structure, and the ability to distinguish textual problems from performance or interpretive problems. All the designers want the dramaturg to have good structural skills. As Skelton puts it, "the dramaturg should have a strong sense of structure and be able to comment on it. You expect them to be articulate about structure, rhythm, language, the placement of scenes." Potter and Selman note their own ability with structure, although Selman comments that she is still learning to keep the big questions in focus rather than the moment-to-moment details. Massing adds that this ability allows the dramaturg to focus on continuity and be the "logic person" in the workshop. Also this skill, according to Flaherty, allows the dramaturg to anticipate the effects of changes. As for the ability to distinguish text from performance, Flaherty, Grieve, Selman, Nelson, and Pearson all note that this is a learned ability through experience, and Grieve in particular says that it comes from "knowing how theatre works."

At a more basic level, several cite more general skills. Flaherty and DeFelice note the need for the dramaturg to "know how to read a play" -- another ability gained through experience. Selman, Potter, and Flaherty specifically comment on the ability to listen. Selman, in particular, cites the ability really to hear the comments and questions as well as the play. Grieve suggests that patience will aid the dramaturg, along with objectivity. DeFelice also notes objectivity as one of the most important skills. He wants the dramaturg to be as objective as possible by keeping his distance. No one, including the dramaturg, can be completely objective, as DeFelice acknowledges by cautioning the dramaturg not to be too close a friend to the playwright. The closer the dramaturg becomes, the less objectivity they have. Mann thinks that the dramaturg can more effectively react to the play from an objective audience position. Using objectivity, the dramaturg can filter the input from the workshop. The dramaturg may then help the playwright, particularly the inexperienced playwright, to filter material from the workshop. Potter, Heatley and DeFelice note in particular, the importance of questions for the playwright. According to DeFelice, "[the dramaturg] must be sensitive to the shaping and timing of questions." The dramaturg must know what, how, and when to ask questions. Finally, Potter sums up the necessary dramaturgical skills, with the view that dramaturgs, like the other participants, should have intuitive and creative skills as well as logical, intellectual skills.

Having these skills and attitudes, or at least a good selection of them, the dramaturg can apply himself to the workshop: prior to, during, and after. Before the workshop begins, the dramaturg should be very active in doing his or her own "homework," and in pre-planning strategies for the workshop.

According to Selman, Nelson, and DeFelice, as well as Haynes, Flaherty, Storey, and Van Heyst, the dramaturg must first get to know the play and the playwright. Selman gives an example of her "homework" in getting to know a play:

> Beforehand I have to know the play really really well. It's a struggle to know it well enough. You've just got to do a lot of homework and to think about it from different angles: to know it structurally, to know it in terms of character development, to know it thematically, to know it in terms of language. I guess the last one might be progression: progression of ideas, progression of characters. So it starts to be where does the action meet sort of the theme or the intent. I may never say any of this to anybody else, but [I need] to know it for myself.

DeFelice adds that you need to discover the play uncritically first, by approaching it as a finished text, and then look at the author's intentions, the style, the structure or arc of the play, the story, the play on stage -- visual and aural images, progression, conventions, characters, relationships, time, space, and anything else you may find. Nelson wants someone who "will get to know me [the playwright], my writing, what I'm interested in, and what I'm trying to achieve with this play." DeFelice agrees, and further suggests that you read previous work by the playwright if possible. Storey cautions that the dramaturg and director often do not know the play well enough, and uninformed opinions can be dangerous. At this point, according to Potter, let the playwright know your biases as part of the effort to establish a relationship.

After the dramaturg knows the play and the playwright, the dramaturg then begins to "plumb the playwright's intentions (Potter)" by asking questions. Potter, DeFelice, Selman, Flaherty, Nelson, Hinton, and Mann all comment on the need to know the playwright's intent. When the text is finished, the intent must be sought solely within the text, but during development intent may be split between the current draft and the playwright's mind. Selman particularly notes that "you need to focus on what the playwright needs and push it. If they have a firm idea fine, but still refine the dialogue. What exactly do you want? You might want to consider. Negotiate rather than confront." On the other hand, Hinton warns of the danger of the dramaturg setting the agenda for the playwright. Grieve and Massing both mention having the playwright define the play in "twenty-five words or less" as a way to probe the playwright's intent.[7] Flaherty also mentions getting the playwright to summarize the play in a sentence as one possible tool in the process. Grieve also suggests a series of miniature twenty-five word statements on plot, theme, character, etc.

Knowing as much as possible about the playwright's intent, the dramaturg should help structure the workshop in order to help achieve that intent. Potter, Heatley, Flaherty, DeFelice, Selman, Nelson, and Massing all believe that you first must define a goal or objective for the workshop and then decide how to structure the workshop to meet that goal. "Goals are a key," according to Massing. She believes that, especially in this time of shrinking budgets, you must use a workshop as efficiently as possible, and to do this you must define goals. Potter believes that the purpose can be vague, but generally the more vague the goal, the more frustrating the workshop. Potter also notes that the dramaturg should raise the initial four assumptions about the use of the workshop at this point. As Selman puts it: "Help her [the playwright] and/or the director think about what should this workshop be. I think we often just assume "a workshop" and we never say what that is."

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[7] In "Excerpts from 'Critical Thinking,'" Freelance, Nov. 1989, p. 26, Michael Springate rejects the use of the "25 words or less" tool:

> No good play reduces itself to 25 words or less, or else it wouldn't exist. It's the relationship of the moment and the events within it, be they relationships of colour, of thought, of personalities -- that is artistry. So rather than having to say 'What's the play about?'...it's much more fruitful to say how does that really fit what's coming next, or how does that really fit this, or that, so you get an understanding of the actual event in duration, the music, if you will, which is necessary, conceptually, for what is being tackled.

On the other hand, playwrights like John Lazarus promote the use of a one sentence summary as a way to keep the play intact in a workshop. (28) Although probing for intent, may seem artificial, it may also be necessary in order to protect the play during the workshop.

DeFelice notes that if the playwright has a non-specific intent, then the dramaturg can help shape the objective. An inexperienced playwright particularly needs help at this stage: "they may need to know more, but you've got to ration that more -- don't overload." (DeFelice) However, Selman warns against making the objective too restrictive, "you need to have an agenda, but learn openly." In addition, Selman notes that you can have secondary objectives as well. Insofar as they are aware of them, Nelson also wants everyone's agenda, "everyone's needs on the table." "Everyone" usually includes the director, the dramaturg, the playwright, and the workshopping organization.

Another task that can be done during these pre-workshop meetings, if not already predetermined by the producing organization, is the choosing of the workshop team. Potter tries to look for a balance of talents. He is strong on structure so he often looks for people with strong intuitive, visceral, and imaginative abilities. Flaherty also notes that she does not want an ideal dramaturg or director, but an ideal balance. She also points out that the members of the team must clarify their language in order to communicate effectively, particularly the dramaturg and playwright. Selman and Pearson both cite the period just prior to the workshop as the time for the team to forge a trusting relationship. Further, Selman adds, the team should define their individual roles. The dramaturg's role in particular should be clarified. For example, will the dramaturg be primarily silent during the workshop, or facilitate the discussion? Here, the lack of definition of the dramaturg's role can help. The dramaturg plays the "rover" position: backing up anyone, going any place, and doing anything, to help the team win. Both Hinton and Mann see the dramaturg as possibly operating as a moderator between the director and the playwright. Flaherty likes to be part of planning this design, providing the workshopping organization's structure and agenda permit.

As this implies, someone must design the overall workshop, including selecting the playwright, director, dramaturg, duration, and available resources. A dramaturg could fulfill this role of "workshop organizer." As part of this design, ideally, the playwright, director, and dramaturg cast the rest of the workshop team to fit the play's needs and the workshop's objectives. As Flaherty notes, she wants, as a dramaturg, to be involved in casting, because "casting [a good team] is half of theatre."

Finally the dramaturg needs to prepare for the beginning of the workshop by making sure that the playwright is open. Heatley and Potter, in particular, focus on preparing the playwright for the workshop. According to Potter, before beginning the workshop, the dramaturg should remind the playwright of the playwright's position as arbiter of the others' input. The playwright can accept or reject whatever he wants. Heatley "encourages the playwright [and no one else at the table] to be judgmental." The "key point" to get across is to "empower the playwright" so that the playwright can be confident enough to remain open. If open enough, the playwright can benefit from the workshop by judging the play from what is there, as shown by the work of the other participants, rather than spending his time closed and defending or explaining the play. At this point, the dramaturg or director can also remind the playwright that all the participants in the workshop, including the playwright, are both in progress -- figuring out their own work in relation to the play -- and collaborators in the process.

With the pre-planning finished, the team moves to the beginning of the workshop. The team should decide beforehand if goals will be "open or hidden". (Potter) If open, then share these with the other participants at the beginning. Massing notes that it is often better not to shape response, but you can sometimes be specific about a specific need, usually focusing on character. As Flaherty notes, you often have at least to tell the other participants who the dramaturg is and what he or she is doing. Mann further mentions that the dramaturg, director, and playwright, having decided before, "set the tone" at the beginning for the shape of the workshop, including the degree of influence expected from the actors, and the relative harshness of questioning.

During the workshop, the dramaturg applies his or her skills and attitudes: listening, observing objectively -- especially structure, differentiating performance from text, filtering, effacing the self, and questioning. According to the dramaturgs and Mann, a main role of the dramaturg is to listen. Flaherty likes to go as far as to remove herself from the table so that she can focus on listening to the play. This allows her to "listen to where it falls off, awkwardness." She also listens specifically in order to monitor areas decided on in the pre-planning as goals, often "the arc of the play."

Most participants indicate that the dramaturg should listen for or observe the structure of the play in the workshop. In particular, Potter, Nelson, and Selman note that the dramaturg and playwright observe the work of the interpretive participants, and "use them as tools" (Nelson) for later dramaturg/playwright discussions. In order to observe effectively, DeFelice, Heatley, Selman, Flaherty, and Hinton believe that the dramaturg should remain objective, even if this requires, as in Flaherty's case, a physical distancing from the table. The dramaturg from this observing position, differentiates text from interpretation to see, for example, "if an actor is doing back flips to find the throughline that is probably not there." (Heatley)

Remaining less involved, filtering input from the reading and the discussion, aids the dramaturg to determine such concerns as assigning responsibility for problems to the text or the interpretation. The dramaturgs, Hinton, and Haynes agree that the dramaturg should not be actively taking part in the discussion and working on the text with the others during the workshop. The dramaturg should here be the self-effacing stage manager who "doesn't speak to hear self." (Heatley) Potter, DeFelice, and Haynes further point out that the dramaturg should not interrupt the flow of the others' work in the workshop. As Haynes says, "when the dramaturg does speak, he commands attention."

Also during discussion, the dramaturg can ask questions to fulfill the playwright's needs as determined in the pre-workshop meetings. For example, if one goal is to examine throughlines, the dramaturg can ask an actor to chart the throughline of the character she is reading. The vision of the role of dramaturg as questioner ranges from Moher's belief that "the dramaturg should ask specific questions, if no one else has", to Nelson's statement that "the dramaturg *should* ask the big dramaturgical questions." Nelson prefers the dramaturg to chair the workshop and facilitate discussions according to the pre-planned objectives.

As Nelson indicates, during the workshop the dramaturg should also focus on the goals, and help implement the structure to achieve these goals, as decided in the pre-planning. Potter, Flaherty, DeFelice, Selman, and Haynes also believe that the dramaturg can facilitate discussion and questions if necessary, according to the pre-planned structure. Haynes, Hinton, and Skelton all mention that the dramaturg can speak to particular points as an aid to discussion. Hinton suggests that the dramaturg speak to the history of the play, either from research or from previous discussions with the playwright. "The dramaturge is less of a 'ballplayer' and more of a 'stand and deliver' type. They speak longer less frequently." (Skelton)

Further, DeFelice, Selman, Flaherty, Hinton, and Nelson note the importance of debriefing the playwright after each day of a workshop. Nelson in particular wants "a constant sense of deconstructing, debriefing, being aware." Flaherty, Selman, and Hinton add that this debriefing can become a pre-workshop meeting in miniature. The dramaturg and playwright can decide if goals have been met or should be changed. In consultation with the director, purposes and plans for the next day can be altered.

Other functions of the dramaturg, not covered under skills and attitudes or preplanning include: being a silent partner or "buddy" to the playwright, acting as a scribe, monitoring the overall workshop and the participants, protecting the playwright, and protecting the play. As part of helping the playwright, the dramaturg, particularly during the workshop, should be a silent partner or friend to the playwright. Many players stress the importance of a person who "focuses specifically on the playwright," or "someone who the playwright can talk to." In particular, the dramaturg can help a playwright adapt from "being a loner to being with a group...especially if it's [the playwright] a non-theatre person." (DeFelice) Flaherty stresses trying to help the playwright listen to the play rather than following along with the reading or taking notes. Similar to her own work as a dramaturg, she believes sitting back allows the playwright to really hear the play -- perhaps the most valuable part of any workshop.

However, all the dramaturgs, except Flaherty, list taking notes, or being a scribe as one of the dramaturg's workshop tasks. "Write down everything. Then [you as dramaturg will] be able to refer exactly to what was said...[and keep as] a full record for the playwright....I feel this is a key." (Heatley) Taking detailed notes frees the playwright to focus on and listen to the workshop, knowing she will be able to refer to and discuss notes from the dramaturg's log later. Flaherty, however, believes the dramaturg must listen too.

All the dramaturgs, as well as others, mentioned the dramaturg monitoring the workshop for such things as playwright overload, and controlling input in order to "keep the playwright open." The dramaturg can monitor attitudes and try to keep everyone respectful of the work and of each other. Flaherty particularly watches the whole group, including herself, for "glazed eyes." Heatley believes that the dramaturg should try to keep the playwright from answering most, including good, questions. It is the question that is important, not the immediate answer. If the playwright is thinking about the answers, he cannot remain open to hearing the questions. Selman tries to "cool down" the playwright at coffee breaks, if necessary, by helping the playwright focus on positive and ignore negative input. DeFelice describes the dramaturg as a midwife keeping the playwright focused on the play.

Most of the players also believe that part of monitoring can include protecting the playwright, or "riding shotgun" (Heatley) as a dramaturgical duty. However, both Heatley and Selman qualified this protection. Both believe the playwright must sometimes hear negative things. The dramaturg should help the playwright to hear those negatives constructively. Nelson bluntly states that a playwright who needs protecting should not be in a workshop. "The playwright is an equal participant. To protect is to coddle, baby, patronize." (Nelson) Nelson does not particularly like "stupid comments or questions," and wants the dramaturg to focus the workshop on particular goals and input, but not to act as a shield.

Heatley, Flaherty, Grieve, Hinton, and Massing suggest that the dramaturg should protect the text as well as, and perhaps even more than, the playwright. Massing and Grieve note that you can bring out the "twenty-five word statements about the play" and other notes about the playwright's intentions in order to guard the text. Massing, Hinton, and Flaherty add that the dramaturg should even guard the play from the playwright if the playwright is getting carried away with the momentum or "runaway train" of the workshop, and playing the "what if? game." (Massing)

Finally, if the workshop includes a public or staged reading, the dramaturg has further duties. The dramaturg will most often act as a discussion facilitator or moderator, trying to get "hot reactions" (Selman) from the audience. Flaherty tries to make the audience a tool, or "co-opt the audience", with focused questions. She tries to get honest first impressions by asking yes/no questions. She also likes to use them as a test audience on plot, clarity, entertainment, and duration. The dramaturg will also continue roles such as scribing, protecting, debriefing, listening, and discerning text from interpretation problems. Flaherty notes in particular that you need staged readings to hear/see better the arc of, and images from, the play.

Most see the dramaturg becoming more active after the workshop in dramaturg/playwright or dramaturg/playwright/director discussions or debriefing sessions. According to DeFelice, the dramaturg should first listen to what the playwright found out during the workshop. Storey wants to talk to the dramaturg "now," and not in front of the actors, and go over notes or share his "triumph or exorcism." As all the input from the workshop often overloads or inundates the playwright, the dramaturg should "with understanding from before and knowledge of where the playwright wants to go, help the playwright sort through the maze of material and pick out the useful." (Mann) Hinton prefers to have this debriefing at least a week later, after the playwright, and the director and dramaturg, have had time to assimilate some information and gain more objectivity.

In this debriefing, the dramaturg becomes more active and uses passive activities from during the workshop, such as listening, observing, and scribing, to inform these discussions. Heatley will use his log to "sum up the cogent thoughts of others" as raw material for this discussion. The dramaturg can then share his or her own observations of structure, interpretation versus text, and particularly the goals from the pre-planning. Finally, Potter, Heatley, Flaherty, and Storey all suggest that the dramaturg end the discussion with, "What next?" The next can include rewrites, production plans, a plan for a future workshop, or the next in a series of workshops. Suggesting that a thorough debriefing might last for three or four days of discussions, DeFelice underlines the importance of the post-workshop stage.

Dramaturgs have some basic needs from the others throughout the entire workshop. It is difficult to discuss dramaturgical needs, and few mentioned anything directly, as the dramaturg usually fulfills others' needs, especially the playwright's needs. However, by implication, clearly the dramaturg does require certain actions or attitudes from the others in order to function effectively. Foremost among them, the playwright must want the dramaturg and the workshop, and to rewrite her script. Hinton mentions that the director must also want the dramaturg involved and not feel threatened by the dramaturg's presence. Finally, as particularly noted by Nelson, the director and actors must do their interpretive jobs well, with respect for the script, in order to provide good raw material for discussions between the dramaturg and the playwright. If the workshop includes a designer, the dramaturg also looks for good raw material from the designer's presentations, exercises, and comments to spark the playwright/dramaturg dialogue.

Complicating this picture, often one person -- the director -- plays both the directorial and the dramaturgical role. This seems to refute the need to define a separate dramaturgical role. However, as both Artistic Directors Potter and Heatley agree, having both a director and a dramaturg can help diffuse the traditional power structure. On the other hand, as Potter, Selman, and Hinton caution, the dramaturg can separate the playwright from the director too much, and increase the isolation of the playwright from the other practitioners.

Chapter Two: The Director

> It's hard to talk about the dramaturge and the director as separate entities, but I guess for me the director is always the ideal. He or she is the godhead. (Storey)

Despite the attempts in the workshop to use a three-way or triangular relationship among the playwright, dramaturg, and director in order to reduce or balance the authority of the director, particularly an artistic director, the director insidiously remains atop the hierarchical pyramid. During the Directors' Colloquium in Calgary in 1987, Robert Benedetti, when discussing NPD, described the spectrum of relationships between the director and the play or the playwright. At one end of the spectrum, the director uses his authority to be a "radical director...who uses the text as a starting point," while at the other end, the director uses his authority to be a "conservative director...[who holds] the playwright...as the ultimate authority." (7) In the middle, the "liberal director" balances his or her vision of the text with the playwright's vision. However, in all cases the decision about the placement of authority rests with the ultimate authority: the director. In response to Benedetti, Pamela Hawthorne, in particular, stated that an NPD director should be a "conservative one." She was "conscious of wearing two hats. [As a dramaturg], I try to help the writer get his or her own vision across in terms of what it is he or she is trying to say....At the same time, I'm also aware in the rehearsal room -- the closer I get to opening night -- that I have to put that hat aside and put my director's hat on." ("Directors' Colloquium" 7) Jim Biros further warned of the danger of losing one of the collaborators in the creative process if the director completely forgoes his own vision. ("Directors' Colloquium" 11) So, in the workshop, should the director function as a dramaturg working primarily with the playwright, or as a director working primarily with the other interpretive artists, or as both? All of the directors I interviewed about the workshop in Edmonton had either functioned as a dramaturg, or director or both: Gerry Potter, Stephen Heatley, Jan Selman, Jim DeFelice, and Kathleen Flaherty. I am going to use their voices, along with the voices of the other Edmonton theatre professionals, to shape my discussion of the director's role. A definition will be hard to find, just as Meredith Levine noted about the difficulty the directors at the Directors' Colloquium had in exactly defining the director's role: "the art of directing...still is delineating its borders." (4)

> FLAHERTY: [When both the director and dramaturg you] have to keep both roles separate. Don't start with produceability, that comes later....[Although], being a director helps [the dramaturg] see text, images, and stage directions, not just as text.

> POTTER: I think they cross over. I would say it's really hard to separate. Because I think that, in a new play situation, a good director is going to be feeding back

impressions and asking questions of the playwright anyway. There is some dramaturgical function involved in those kinds of questions.

SELMAN: Playing both roles, or wearing both hats, I tend to, in the workshop, be a director. To me, analyzing a play as a dramaturg or a director are very similar processes. A lot of the preparation's the same. In there [the workshop], I'm mostly [going] about making it a productive, creative time for the actors in order that the playwright see [their work].

FLAHERTY: I can't do both at the same time. I have done, but when I do that I'm completely the dramaturge in my mind. [Should] I have a different hat for each of my heads?

POTTER: [It] can be difficult [to do both], but it can also make for a better experience for everybody, because it doesn't separate the playwright off.

ERTMAN: It depends on whether the person's a problem solver, as many directors often are. Oftentimes it means that they are good at packaging flaws in the script. I think a director who really understands how a play's put together can function as a dramaturg. Maybe it's better to have both.

SELMAN: I'd have both any day, [providing they're] the right collaborator at the right time, because it is something to negotiate. As a director, I don't have any hesitation about straying into dramaturgical issues. I do [delve into dramaturgical issues]. And so do I expect a director to do when I'm the dramaturg. To me, in lots of ways, two minds are better than one. We get to slightly essentialize our foci by having two people.

MASSING: I really like working with dramaturges, [but] not everyone can afford to have them. Some directors are such strong dramaturges that [they do not need dramaturgs].

NELSON: Directors are funny because they don't really have a clearly defined role in the workshop process. If you're doing a staged reading or a public reading, the director is good at just rehearsing. I don't know if I've ever been in a workshop situation where there has been a director who's there to direct. It's mostly been, the director is there to be the dramaturge as well.

HEATLEY: As a director, I'm doing my damnedest, with the other interpretive artists, to make what's there work.

That's not to suggest that it doesn't. I'm going to try to make Three Sisters work. I'm going to try to make Long Day's Journey Into Night work.

POTTER: The simplest, maybe simplistic, [definition of] the directorial function would be to encourage the actors to find what's in the script, and give as good an account of the play as possible: render it well in the reading. Coach the actors towards that. And maybe to help the actors find what their role in the workshop is.

DEFELICE: It's important for the director to bring all those elements together, to bring together a group of actors to help everyone collectively discover the play, including the playwright.

NELSON: Sometimes directors will try and make it their play. Some directors have the attitude that this is our play.

HEATLEY: We're trying to accommodate the needs of the play from the understanding of the director, but moreso from the understanding of the playwright. Originally I felt everything had to be based on what the playwright was interested in: everything, everything, everything. I still think that's vital, because it's a bit patronizing to say we know what the play needs and what the playwright needs. [But] I think what I began to feel over the course of time was that I spent a lot of time downplaying my own beliefs or thoughts about plays. I began to trust my own instincts more.

POTTER: I would try to leave my own interpretation -- make that secondary. It's still there. If you're going to help the actors, you've got to have some understanding of the play you're working from, and that understanding in a way is going to be partly your interpretation. But it's certainly not a place where you want to show off as a director your cleverness with concepts or your ability with actors in order to get some particular vision of a scene.

HINTON: [As long as] the director's done their homework and committed to the play. Committing is so important. There are too many directors who go "okay here's one more play and one more workshop."

STOREY: There are some directors who have no use for playwrights, who have no ability to communicate to them, have no appreciation of what it is they do, and feel no responsibility to them. I think that those directors should probably not do new work, and should definitely not be anywhere near the workshop process.

MANN: The ideal director in a workshop is someone who doesn't even need to be a great director of plays necessarily. I think it's important that they have a real strong understanding of playwriting and dramaturgy, that they be the kind of person who's open to listen to what the playwright wants out of the workshop.

HINTON: From my perspective, the director has so much power. They need to give it. They need to share it. They need to be in touch with how the playwright wants them to use that power as well.

VAN HEYST: I think that the ideal director at a workshop is somebody who would dearly love to direct this play. It interests them, and they like it, and they're excited at the prospect of presenting it to an audience.

STOREY: He or she is the godhead. That's the person who is sitting there going, "this will work, and this will be exciting, and this will be something that I want to do on my stage. This is something that I want to do."

Disagreement continues about the director's role. Certainly all the writers want generous directors who commit to the work and share their power. Further, these playwrights also noted that Edmonton directors, particularly Potter and Heatley, fulfill this desire well. Potter and Heatley also agree on the need to have a director's vision while placing the playwright's vision foremost. Still, disagreement remains about whether the director does, or should, play both dramaturgical and directorial roles, or "wear both hats."

It seems the director inevitably plays both roles, at least to some extent. In the discussion, Potter, and elsewhere Selman, note the advantage of getting the director and playwright closer together when the director plays both roles. However, Selman, as well as Heatley, stress the advantage of having two collaborators and two opinions. Heatley adds that there does not need to be consensus, but if the director and dramaturg do agree then the playwright should consider their point. However, the playwright should remain the ultimate arbiter. All three like the balancing of the director's power, at least as much as possible, in the three-way relationship. All three also, but particularly Selman, like the focus allowed by having both. The dramaturg can focus on the playwright, and the director can really focus on his or her own usual job pushing the actors to do their best to "make the text work."

Perhaps, a more useful metaphor than imagining the director/dramaturg as wearing two hats or changing hats, would be to conceive of them as switching from playing chess to playing checkers. Both games occur on the same board, but the player must abide by different rules. It would be difficult but not impossible to play both at once. Someone adept enough could impose both games on the same mental board and play both simultaneously. Or, one not wanting to play both at the same time, could keep the two games going side by side and switch focus from one to the other.

Since I have already looked at the dramaturg's role, I will assume the director can have and apply similar skills prior to, during, and after the workshop. I will narrow my focus in this chapter to what in the "simplest definition," as Potter says, the director does as a director. In addition, I will examine those areas where the roles cross over, when most of the players agree that the director usually fulfills that function.

The director should have particular skills and attitudes. Like the dramaturg, the director should commit to the play and the playwright. Hinton particularly notes commitment as a key for the director. Also, the director especially needs to be generous and "open to what the playwright wants," (Mann) including restricting her own ego and sharing her own biases. However, as many state, the most important attitude for a director is a desire to do his or her own job well. "The biggest offer the director and actors can make is to take the script absolutely seriously, believe it works, and do our job to bring it to life." (Selman) Ertman adds, "just do your own job and let the playwright see if it works." According to Storey, the biggest problem with workshops occurs when the director and actors believe that they have to "do something special." The director should focus on "what do I need to know to produce this play." (Storey) However, Ertman cautions that a problem-solver director might do his or her job so well that they package flaws or obscure textual problems with their own imposed creative solutions, and prevent the playwright from seeing if the play works or not.

Ertman implies that the director needs to have at least some dramaturgical skills as well as directorial skills. Although, as Moher notes, only some directors have good dramaturgical skills, and directors capable of dramaturgy may not have the time during the workshop. In particular, directors also need to have skills with structure and with distinguishing performance from text. Grieve notes that the director especially needs to be able to separate the text from his or her own direction. Selman mentions the director's ability to watch the action for "neutral moments" as a useful structural skill. According to Ertman, the director should, with this knowledge of how plays work, be able to tell the playwright if the text is workable even if there is not time in the workshop to make it work. However, Storey cautions anyone in the process, but particularly directors and designers, from limiting the playwright's vision with practicality -- "anything can work on stage." He believes that:

> At some point practicalities have to be addressed, [but it is] better to give the writer a freer rein and then -- once this marvelous piece of writing is realised -- figure out how to do it. Anything is possible given a sustainable convention which will support the production. If the writing is good, someone will figure out how to stage it.

Like the dramaturg, the director should also have more general skills like the abilities to be patient, filter input, listen, question, and the ability to distance themselves enough to respond to the play as a potential audience member. Both Storey and Massing stress that the best directorial questions come out of the director's process. In addition, the director should be a good chairperson since the director most often fills this role in the workshop. As a good chair, the director needs good organizational skills such as time management, diplomacy and the ability to communicate -- classic directorial attributes, as Skelton notes. The director also needs other classic directorial attributes such as working well with actors, creativity, instinct, flexibility, risk-taking, and energy. They also need focus, as Massing, in particular, notes. Concerning instinct, Skelton stresses the need for the director to be able to work from the gut rather than intellectually, and to act without a plan if necessary or desirable. If always motivated intellectually the director will miss a great deal. Potter also notes the need for the director and the dramaturg to accept the logically inexplicable if it works dramatically. Finally, both Skelton and Selman emphasize the importance of energy and focus that the director should bring to the entire workshop. This energy and focus can then help the director, and in turn the actors, to accelerate their process as "you only have three days not three weeks." (Selman)

The director also needs to bring these skills and attitudes to the planning prior to the workshop. As Selman pointed out in the "discussion," both the director and dramaturg go through similar processes and perform similar duties before the workshop. Both must know the play and the playwright well. DeFelice adds that the director "discovers" the play using "director tools." The director should do "classic director homework." (Skelton) As for getting to know the playwright, "the role of the director at the beginning is to try get into the emotional, theatrical mindspace, heartspace of the playwright." (Heatley) As noted in her article on workshops, Selman stresses the importance of setting aside time before the workshop for the director to get to know the play and the playwright. Hinton also particularly emphasizes her need as a playwright to have time with the director before the workshop. As noted in the previous chapter, the dramaturg, director, and playwright need to forge a good working relationship by making an effort to know, respect, and trust each other before the workshop begins.

Again, this implies certain obligations upon the workshop organizer or organization. Often the workshop organizer is also the director and artistic director, and must arrange for time for the three to meet. As Hinton notes, ideally the director and playwright decide together whether to have a workshop, then begin this process. DeFelice describes the director as the "shaper of the team," as the director often fills the role of workshop organizer, including selecting the dramaturg, playwright, and play.

Once a relationship has been established, or as part of the establishing of the relationship, the director and dramaturg try to find out and/or clarify the playwright's intentions in order to set a goal or objective for the workshop. In addition to "plumbing" for the playwright's intent, the director often has, and should share, his or her own goals. "They [directors] need to enter into the process with a strong sense of what elements in the play need exploration." (Selman 17). As he said in the discussion, Heatley has come to believe that the director should share his ideas with the playwright: "To me it became more of a collaboration in terms of planning." Potter and DeFelice add that they suggest their ideas secondarily to or "after the playwright." Both Hinton and Nelson note that they want to hear the director's conscious goals as part of the process of setting up the overall goal for the workshop.

Having a goal, the director often plays a large part in translating that objective into a workable structure in the workshop. All the directors, as well as others, noted the importance of the director's role when setting up the structure. "Once you have an objective, the director must parlay that into working with actors." (DeFelice) Massing likes to plan the structure with the director, while Hinton notes that the playwright often does not know what structure she wants. As both Heatley and Selman note, the director must be creative and flexible to choose appropriately from the many possible options or ways to explore the play in the workshop. Pearson gives an example of the director -- Heatley, in this particular case -- choosing to stand a play up on its feet quickly. This was an appropriate choice, as it is a non-naturalistic play, and it was most important to find the rhythms.

Another planning responsibility, casting, often rests with the director. Massing likes to be consulted, but she recognizes that casting is an art and the director often has good instincts and ideas. Potter encourages casting against type early in the development, as that can "provide more grist for the playwright's mill." When the play is later in development, Potter believes in casting as if doing the show, in order to test the play for production -- "to see how it's working." DeFelice adds that the director must create a balanced team: do not choose all actors who are friends, as that might further isolate the playwright, yet you do not want actors who have not worked together and who will be too busy figuring out how to work with each other rather than focusing on the play. In addition, Pearson, Haynes, and Mann point out that, in a series of workshops, the bringing in of new voices or adding a new player or players to the team can bring a good fresh energy, as well as a new perspective for the playwright. This needs to be balanced against the value of using the same actors who know the characters and the play more deeply.

Finally, having shaped the team, the director, like the dramaturg, must help to keep the playwright open in preparation for the beginning of the workshop. Hinton notes that she wants the director to carry an open atmosphere into the workshop.

At the beginning, the director, according to Heatley, often "lays out the ground rules" for the workshop. As a part of these rules, Haynes suggests that the director defines the actors' roles, and creates a "dynamic for the workshop." Similarly, Van Heyst and Selman want the director to "set the tone," and let people know what is expected of them. Both Flaherty and Pearson observe that the director often communicates the goals of the workshop to the actors at the beginning. However, Massing notes that she usually does not want to communicate goals, as she does not want to interfere with the actors' immediate response to the text.

During the workshop, the director's role diverges more from that of the dramaturg. The director functions mainly in two ways. First, the director works with the actors, as in Potter's simplest definition, "to render the play well." Second, the director most often chairs, including organizing the workshop and leading discussion.

When working with actors, the director should lead them, as Heatley mentioned in the "discussion," in the usual rehearsal manner, treating the text as fixed. Heatley suggests that the director "frame and focus the text for the actors," while Massing agrees, providing the director "throws the ball in the actor's court" rather than explicitly directing the actor. She finds watching the actor's process with the text, finding or not finding elements, much more informative than supplying them with answers and telling them what to do. At the same time, DeFelice thinks that the director should guide the actors not to do too polished a performance, as this may gloss over elements in the play that need work. Both Haynes and Mann look for early director input after a first reading so that they can have a better crack at it in a subsequent reading.

Ertman, Selman, and Heatley all stress the importance of helping the actors accelerate their process with specific direction. Selman, in particular, tries to focus the actors on an active rather than emotive reading that helps chart the action of the character and the play, rather than the character's emotional state. Mann adds that the director should be prepared to steer the actors away from assumptions that slant the play. Finally, Heatley notes that in an accelerated process the director must be sensitive enough to "know when to pull back."

The director as well as the actors must also go through an accelerated process, according to Selman and Massing. As Potter noted in the "discussion," the director's vision of the play must guide the interpretation the workshop without becoming too intrusive. Hinton also sees a director's "raw vision" as necessary to guide the workshop. In Skelton's view, the director should do some director's investigation of the material and try different slants. DeFelice describes the director as continuing to discover the play using the director's tools. Selman adds that the director and actors can show the playwright, particularly an inexperienced playwright, what can be done without words. Both Skelton and Selman comment on the ability of the director's process to "stimulate the playwright." (Skelton) According to Selman, Potter, and Heatley the director should also focus on director's questions by constantly looking at staging concerns like transitions, mechanics, and imagery.

Almost all stress the need for the director to be an effective chairperson. "The onus of the workshop's communication in the moment is on the director." (Flaherty) Many cite the need for the director to organize the schedule well, using time efficiently. In addition, the director should keep the energy up and focused, and control the interaction among all the personalities.

But most focused on the director's role in leading discussion. As part of leading the discussion, the director, not the dramaturg, usually "protects the playwright", and "monitors playwright overload." More particularly, Massing wants the director to "gently control the discussion to achieve goals," while moving the discussion away from the "unuseful." According to Hinton, the director should cue the actor how to speak, so that they "don't throw out the baby with the bath water." She wants the director to make them be specific, and say exactly why they did not like something, not just generally dismiss the play. Mann also wants the director to make sure points are clear.

"Focus on the table and the text," in order to control discussion, suggests Heatley. He also tries to get the actors to respond generally as actors and not as dramaturgs. Although, if the actors do respond dramaturgically, Nelson wants the chair to guide them with a firm hand. Selman adds that you need to keep discussion focused, and "offer ways for all to contribute[8]." Also, Mann and Hinton want the chairperson to find a way for "those who need to be heard, to be heard," (Mann) even if it means going outside the established guidelines.

Many see questions as a large part of this discussion. Moher and Hinton want the director to ask specific questions of the actors in order to narrow their response. Skelton, Potter and Selman all note that the director will ask regular rehearsal and dramaturgical questions. Heatley adds that he will not ask trick questions with right or wrong answers but rather questions about the actors' experiences. According to DeFelice, the director should be a conduit for the dramaturg's questions for the actors, while Massing thinks the director should take instructions for questions to the actors from the playwright. Moher indicates that the director will ask questions that need to be asked and to which the playwright is blind. Ertman also notes that the director needs to "find the right things to ask."

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[8] See Selman's article (19) on ways for the director to control a discussion that gives value to all input while focusing on the needs of the playwright.

Many, like Selman and Haynes, suggest that the best way to communicate in the workshop is to ask everything as a question, rather than to make limiting statements:

> It's important that all comments be phrased as questions, so that instead of saying, 'this doesn't work,' you're forced, in an analytical way, to say [to yourself], 'okay this doesn't work. Why doesn't it work? What don't I like about it?' Forming [it] into a question forces them to not make snap judgments and understand why they felt as they did. (Nelson)

Van Heyst replies that "frequently asking a question can often be a roundabout way of making an assertion. If you have a question, [then] ask a question." Massing adds that "honest, not leading questions are an art that can be very liberating [and] open up the process." Questions can be useful, just as with a director in rehearsal, according to Mann, but he thinks that most of the participants have not been trained to ask questions in a useful way. Although, he does think that the director uses rehearsal skills to ask good questions. Also, all note that simple, emotional statements of response do not need to be stated as questions.

Finally, during the workshop, the director participates in debriefing sessions for the playwright, particularly in planning adjustments in the workshop goals or structures, and in shaping a public/staged reading, if any. Selman notes that the director has final say in restructuring, while Hinton wants the restructuring decided in a "director/playwright huddle." The dramaturg may also participate.

If there is a public reading, Nelson and Hinton both want the director to give the reading a shape, so that the audience can focus on the text, not the actors' uncertainty with the text. Hinton wants the director to "give it a shape, even if it's not right for the play, but for now." Cautioning, Mann adds that the director should give some direction, but not too much, to the actors, as the reading is not a full performance.

After the workshop, the director and dramaturg perform very similar roles. They debrief with the playwright, often finishing with the question: What next? Storey notes, that as part of this debriefing, he welcomes "legitimate" director questions and comments: "I think it's legitimate to be able to say to a writer: 'I can do that. We can do that. She can stand on her head and sing 'Yankee Doodle Dandy,' and spit wooden nickels, if that's what you want her to do. But I wouldn't know to do that if you weren't in this room.'" Heatley and Potter add that the director can now offer their own concepts for, or opinions of, the play, with a "take it or leave it" (Potter) attitude, to the playwright. As an artistic director, Heatley acknowledges that giving opinions can be tricky, but that the playwright should be encouraged to think of it as "just one point of view." Further, he thinks that if his and the playwright's views diverge widely, then the workshop has shown that they would not be a good team to produce the play.

Since the director, often artistic director, retains a position of power he or she does not exactly have "needs" from the other players, but rather requirements. They require the same implied needs that the dramaturg has of the other interpretive artists: actors and designers should work capably and quickly, focusing on serving the text and the process rather than themselves. Further, the director wants them willing and able to take directions and be led in discussion. According to Heatley the dramaturg can help to "simplify the director's job." Flaherty adds that a dramaturg with directorial skills can help with such things as staging observations. However, Hinton warns that, as a director can feel threatened by a dramaturg, they usually prefer a dramaturg with no strong directorial opinions or attitudes.

Rather than needs from others, the director generally has relationships with others, individually and as a group. DeFelice, who calls the director "the shaper of the team and how the team is utilized," draws a diagram of the relationships:

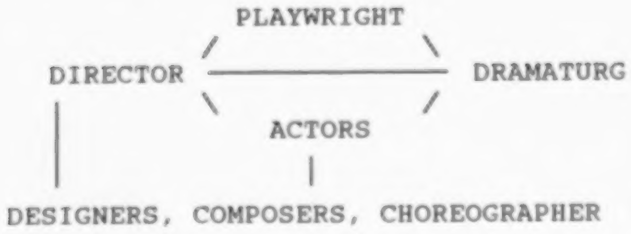

figure 1:
Participant Relationships

Only the director has direct relationships with all players. Skelton describes the relationships as a "food chain:" all players are important in the chain, but the "triumvirate" of the director, dramaturg, and playwright, remain on top, with the actors or designers on the bottom, depending on the type of play. He further describes the chain in the triumvirate going "playwright -> director -> dramaturg," in descending order.

Both Hinton and Massing stress the importance of the playwright/director relationship at the centre of the workshop. Hinton wants to develop this relationship from the beginning. She wants "the playwright to be in charge, along with the director," while recognizing that the director must share or give power in order for this to happen. Further, Hinton adds that the director and playwright must agree on the presence of the dramaturg, and have a relationship separate from the dramaturg:

> I think inevitably what happens if the three of them meet all the time, it's like a kid going off

> to kindergarten. If mommy [the dramaturg] stays all the time, the kid doesn't have the real experience. I think, like it or not, the director and the playwright, that's the most important relationship (Hinton).

However, while underlining the importance of the director/playwright relationship, Hinton also underlines the ultimate nature of authority in the workshop process and in Canadian theatre in general. She needs the relationship with the director, because the director has the power.

Chapter Three: The Playwright

> [The workshop] can be destructively centered on [the playwright]. All of the problems that come up in the workshop, people assume are the playwright's problems. It's why it's so important to work with people that you know are behind you and behind the script. So often it turns into 'playwright hunting season.' (Nelson)

The playwright's centrality in the theatre in general, and the workshop in particular, has been debated heatedly, especially in English-Canadian theatre. In CTR's NPD issue, Robert Wallace notes in his introduction the fervent support of the playwright's centrality advocated by Urjo Kareda, John Murrell, and Elliott Hayes. (4-5) Murrell in particular is "absolutely convinced of the central role of the writer in theatre....This is one point on which I'm absolutely evangelical." (Brennan 35) Wallace then wonders about the possibilities of the Quebec model, where the words become one component of the theatre experience. Elsewhere, Ann Wilson argues that, as a feminist strategy, women should fragment the authority of the text and make the text one element rather than the centre (175). Paul Leonard suggests renaming the writer -- the creator, to remind "that the theatrical presentation itself, not the script, is the central focus for our attention." (48) Further, Leonard wants "the playwrights...[to] give up their position as the aristocrat (aesthetically speaking) of the theatrical process." (50) Years later, Malcolm Page still wonders, "should we fear the Tyranny of the Playwright?" (76) However, Betty Jane Wylie quotes Peter Brook on the need for the centrality of the playwright: "There is eventually a need for authorship to reach the ultimate compactness and focus that collective work is almost obliged to miss." (26)

In addition, many see the workshop process as promoting the centrality of the script. Leonard believes the workshop process contributes to the centrality of the writer and the text by focusing on both. (50) Kathleen Flaherty adds that she assumes you deal with a "set text" in a workshop process, since that is what the process is set up to examine. ("Table Stakes" 29-30) Both Flaherty and Leonard note that the workshop focuses on producing a text, not a performance, so inevitably the playwright will be the central authority. According to Flaherty, "The script as object is more important in this setting than the piece of theatre for which it is a blueprint." ("Table Stakes" 29) Leonard also warns against producing texts only rather than pieces of theatre. Benedetti argues, "I don't believe in dramatic literature....I think what we call a script is a residue of an act of creation for the living theatre, and...at best, it transmits a kind of essential energy that can generate subsequent acts of theatrical creation." ("Directors' Colloquium" 11)

I have been assuming the centrality of the writer throughout this thesis. The workshop process delineated herein deals with a "set text." Nevertheless, the workshop players, at least in Edmonton, try to maintain the connection between script and theatre event. For example, the workshop process is often connected to the production of these "set texts" as blueprints for theatrical creations. Whereas the director has authority in the theatre, and still maintains power in the workshop, the playwright is the central focus of the workshop process, and therefore, at the centre of my work. So, in this chapter, as part of the examination of the role of the writer, I will look at such issues as developing the play or the playwright, production versus non-production workshops, and duration of workshops. To assist me in this process I am using the voices of playwrights Janet Hinton, Conni Massing, Frank Moher, Greg Nelson, and Ray Storey, as well as the other practitioners.

HINTON: It's different than a production, where everyone else has got a hand in it. It's really you, your work that's being workshopped, [at least] initially.

NELSON: The workshop has to be suited to not only the individual play and the individual playwright, and his or her tastes and needs and the way that they work, [but it] also has to be suited to what stage the play is at.

HINTON: What you want to find out as a playwright, is what you've got and then what you need to have. What are the strengths? What's really cooking here? Then [you want to] get someone interfering with the cooking, [finding out which are] the bad spices.

STOREY: I like to be challenged. I don't like somebody to take it away from me.

HINTON: [You] have to be prepared for [the fact] that it's going to be ripped out of your hands now, and shared publicly.

MOHER: [What's more important is] the story being told as opposed to how I tell it....The end is more important than the means.

HINTON: I think the most important thing is if you're ready and itching to have the work shared, which is why we write plays in the first place. My interest is in collaborating. You want to share, and this is your opportunity to share.

FLAHERTY: I think that it's really legitimate that the workshop is a process whereby the playwright learns what is going to be effective on the stage in terms of his or her play. I assume that the process of the workshop is basically geared toward the playwright.

HEATLEY: The playwright has to feel like they're loved, that they're respected and, over and above that, they also have a responsibility. We all have a lot of work to do. The theatre is a process and we all have work to do within it.

VAN HEYST: I think that the ideal playwright [for a workshop] is somebody who has not already designed and directed the play for themselves, in their head, before [the workshop] begins to happen. It's the playwright who comes in unsure of what it all will end up being, who is the most open to what the workshop can offer, and the most likely to be thrilled and delighted with what it does offer.

MASSING: I think you have to go in content with, at peace with, the fact that you're baring your soul. At the same time, you also have to be open to what you discover.

NELSON: You can gain objectivity from hearing it. Suddenly it's not the voices in your head, it's voices coming out of mouths. You understand what you've asked an actor to do, an audience to listen to.

MOHER: When you're not clear on what you're trying to do, workshops are very useful.

POTTER: [If you have] a playwright who has a lot of craft, and is used to operating on an abstract level as well as a creative level, [then] workshops are good for them and they use workshops well.

FLAHERTY: It's not up to the workshop to decide on behalf of the playwright what should happen. [Just say] this is what's happening now, and there's potential for this or that, or this or that to happen. You should not ever be telling a writer what they're supposed to be doing or cannot do [even if] they want to be told.

STOREY: I think that [workshops are] highly overrated, but I think that they can be very effective tools for the writer, if that's the way [as tools] that they are used. When a lot of selfless individuals get together to play for the afternoon, to pretend that we're all going to do this play, that they're all going to give their Sterling Award performances, it can be quite magical and invigorating for a writer. And sometimes, [it can be] the shot in the arm that you really need to go back and do it again, and keep doing it...we are human. Writers do need a certain amount of coddling and cuddling. If it feels good, do it.

MOHER: Twenty percent of a workshop is useful. The rest is usually well-intentioned, but you develop a capacity to sift through.

NELSON: I think it's important to remember that the workshop is not an end unto itself, which it sometimes becomes. If you're not working towards a piece of theatre, a theatre event, then everything's just hypothetical.

MOHER: The workshop is a brush that is probably used too much, especially in the early stages of [play] development.

VAN HEYST: Three days is the maximum. Workshops like fish stink after three days. After three days the playwright should be equipped to work on alone or have decided to never deal with it again.

Rather than discussing the playwright's role in the workshop, most players discussed either the playwright's position in, or use of, the workshop. When considering the playwright's role in a workshop, the discussion inevitably led to the efficacy of the workshop process itself. As workshops were originally conceived to help playwrights write plays, perhaps this should not be surprising. However, participants also often intertwined discussions of the role of the playwright and the role of the process. The development of the process without clear definition may have led to a conception of the workshop as institution rather than tool, and therefore to a confusion about the playwright's role as user of the workshop as tool or as the object for the workshop to be used upon.

Probably all would agree that each workshop should be individually suited to each playwright. Given that assumption, playwrights use workshops in both similar and different ways. Nonetheless, all can agree that the intent of the process centres on helping the play and the playwright. Even then, being at the centre can be positive or negative. All the attention can aid or potentially hinder, or even destroy a play. Keeping the playwright's position in mind, I will summarize the participants' thoughts on the skills and attitudes that can help the playwright make the workshop experience a positive, useful one: prior to, during, and after.

In order to use the workshop effectively, playwrights need to have certain skills and attitudes. For the playwright these can be difficult to separate as some of his or her primary skills are an application of certain attitudes. In her article, Selman cites Moher describing two kinds of playwrights: "those who feel they must answer every comment and defend their play, and those who take it all in." Selman feels that "both kinds are under high stress." (Selman 17) Hinton continually emphasizes the vulnerability of the playwright going into the workshop situation. Concerning the playwright's approach to the workshop, Selman asked, "How should they [approach the workshop], versus what's possible?" For the playwright, the workshop can be like a nerve-racking audition. Perhaps a primary attitude for playwrights should be a confidence without being defensive that helps them to deal with stress.

As the workshop process can be defined as an aid to rewriting, perhaps the most important combination of skill and attitude for the playwright is the skill to rewrite, along with the willingness to change. Nelson, Heatley, and Potter, all cite the "ability and willingness to change" as essential. Although the playwright primarily rewrites before and after a workshop rather than during, without this ability and willingness, why have a workshop. For Nelson, Moher, and Ertman specifically, rewriting includes the ability to see what does and does not work, "to see the play in the light of what it needs." (Nelson) Moher claims that the playwright must be "his own best dramaturge."

When rewriting, the playwright must figure out the "rules" of the structure, and "not impose old models (Moher)." According to Moher, the structure will have its own logic that will squeeze out even good material if it becomes unnecessary to the structure. He further adds that with each change, you must lose, and that the biggest mistake writers make is not throwing away when rewriting. "It has to be wonderful to be over sixty minutes in the first act, or over two hours in total. You have to earn every minute over that, or be a playwright who has earned the right to make a longer play." (Moher) Also, he suggests that "the second draft is the draft to play with," as the play will never be as good without risks. The playwright can use the workshop to help him figure out the "rules," either in preparation for rewriting or for testing changes from a previous rewrite.

In order to use the workshop as a springboard for rewriting, or as a test for changes, the playwright needs to have many of the following attitudes. Both Storey and Hinton note that playwrights should be ready and want to share their work. Storey adds that he often looks for affirmation or confirmation of what he has done, but Massing cautions to not look only for affirmation, but to remain open to other possibilities, particularly ones that may surprise.

Most players stress openness as the key attitude for the playwright. As noted, Heatley claims that the openness of the playwright is key to the whole process and a prime focus for both the director and dramaturg. In order to be open, the playwright needs several other subordinate attitudes.

Nelson, Hinton, and Selman note that the playwright must trust in his or her work to remain open. In addition, Selman thinks that the playwright must feel "a sense of ownership." A trust in her work will help give the playwright the confidence she needs to deal with the workshop. Hinton, Nelson, Massing, Potter, Heatley, and Grieve, all feel that confidence will help keep the playwright open. Heatley wants the playwright to be "confident but not cocky." Heatley thinks the playwright should believe in his work, but not to the point where he dismisses all comment as unworthy of the work. Nelson adds that the playwright should have "confidence that the others could be, and likely are, wrong." Since they don't have the playwright's access to the imaginary perfect end product, the others are not in a position to be the ultimate arbiter. Finally, as Flaherty noted in the "discussion," a playwright lacking confidence can latch on to others opinions and want to be told what to do rather than holding onto the core of his or her play. Flaherty wants the playwright to be more confident, but she also wants the others in the workshop to recognize that none of them is the playwright, and therefore not tell the playwright what to do.

According to Selman, openness can include patience, curiosity, an openness to others, a still-open imagination, an awareness of options, and an ability to receive and store comments for later rather than react to them immediately. Grieve adds that the playwright must "drop the play they saw in their head." Pearson expands this to say that the playwright must push aside expectations, especially as "It's like the difference between reading a book and watching a movie [for the playwright] to see her characters performed by actors." Nelson, Pearson, and Potter, note, as part of being open, the playwright should not be defensive. According to Nelson, the playwright should remind him or herself that if it's a bad day there will be another where they can rebound. Finally, as Van Heyst indicates in the "discussion", and Mann states, a playwright should "be ready to embrace collaboration [and an] exciting if overwhelming process." If not, they should not use, or at least try to avoid, workshops.

Assuming the playwright embraces the process, the following skills will serve her well: the ability to listen, to distance herself, to assess and filter input, to discriminate performance from text. In addition, she should have a thick skin and good instincts, including the ability to think laterally. As with the director and dramaturg, the playwright must have the ability to listen during the workshop. Hinton, Nelson, Massing, Potter, Heatley, Flaherty, DeFelice, and Pearson all emphasize listening as a necessary playwright's skill. As he said in the "discussion," DeFelice recognizes the difficulty the playwright can have in hearing his or her own words. Nelson tries to just "shut up and takes notes." Massing sits back and listens. She warns against taking too many notes as that can be a strategy to cover up vulnerability -- just listen. Potter cautions the playwright to "listen openly, but selectively." He wants the playwright to listen to the others' comments with an open mind but to focus on what he or she finds useful and to disregard other input. In addition, distancing oneself from the play, can help the playwright listen and gain objectivity, according to Nelson, Massing, and Hinton.

Listening and trying to be as objective as possible, the playwright, like the director and the dramaturg, needs to assess the difference between performance and text. "Assess whose job it is to fix the problem." (Massing) Nelson agrees, but concedes that "sometimes you never know, and sometimes it's both [the performance and text]." In addition, according to Massing, the playwright must assess if a performance is too good and is covering a textual problem, as well as if a bad performance creates a problem that is not in the text. Thus a playwright should constantly be judging.

Massing adds that in order to judge effectively, the playwright needs to have "theatre knowledge." Moher notes that the playwright must use instinct as well as intellect to assess his own work and others' input. Heatley believes playwrights should be "lateral thinkers, like any artist." Rather than only seeing the direct logical or rational cause-and-effect implications of his or her work and the discussion in the workshop, Heatley wants the playwright to use lateral thinking to see creative possibilities tangential to the direct thrust of the play or the thrust of others input. Lateral thinking can spark new and exciting possibilities for future drafts or spark unseen solutions to problems in the present draft.

Most believe the playwright should judge and filter all input from the workshop. As Moher noted in the "discussion," he thinks that the playwright sifts through and discards eighty percent of the input. Potter adds that the playwright receives twenty percent useful input only in a good workshop. Skelton states, "It's the others' jobs to inject ideas; it's the playwright's job to decide if they're useful or not."

As part of the ability to handle input, Nelson, Heatley, Grieve, and Skelton all suggest a "thick skin" for the playwright. Heatley cautions, "thick, but not impermeable, [because] a playwright must be sensitive as well." Nelson adds that a playwright needs to be able to say, "what an idiot," about someone's comment, while recognizing at the same time a potential kernel of truth. The need for this ability, a useful ability for anyone working in a group, is heightened by the playwright's sensitive position, since he puts his unfinished creation before others for their criticism.

Potter also cites experience as a skill. In particular, he links openness to experience, and says inexperienced playwrights often cannot be open, because first workshops can be a terrifying experience. Haynes advises all the other participants to be very careful with a new playwright. Mann has seen "young playwrights with nerves high and skills low destroyed and [rendered] unable to listen." As an inexperienced playwright, Storey found all the sudden attention from the group after working on his own so overwhelming he could not focus on the work. However, Hinton notes that you get better from a bad experience, and Mann calls workshops "painfully useful" for new playwrights. Pearson adds that a playwright has to have a bad experience before recognizing and rejecting too much input. "The experienced playwright knows how to filter, [so] the dramaturg must help the inexperienced playwright to get the most out of a workshop." (DeFelice)

Mann, Moher, Selman, and Massing observe that as a playwright gains a greater knowledge of her own process, she can judge the usefulness of input more appropriately. Moher specifies that he went through a ten-year process learning more on overall structure. As well, Mann, Ertman, Storey, and Flaherty note that the playwright gains more knowledge of how theatre works, including more knowledge of the collaborative process and of translating ideas from "the page to the stage." (Mann) In addition, with more experience with workshops "the playwright learns to be selective [and] not to ask for too much. [They] develop the skill to know what to look for." (DeFelice)

Moher thinks he is now better at using workshops: he has gained greater facility in using the workshop process through experience. He knows whether to be more closed or more open, depending upon his objectives. If he is unsure of what he is trying to say, he tries to stay open to others' reactions in general. If he knows what he wants to say, he uses others' input more specifically to check certain goals and remains closed to other input.

The other playwrights also gained from experience. Nelson says experience gave him more confidence. He is learning what he wants and what he will not put up with. Hinton adds that her general skills, like listening and distancing herself, have improved. Massing says, "I'm better at assessing what's been said and what it means -- what people are responding to." Also, knowing better how to get information out of the others has led Massing to better planning ahead. Storey adds that he has learned what he does not want; at the beginning he tells people to keep their playwriting ideas to themselves.

Storey also notes that a good sense of himself and of his work allows him to run his own workshops. More experienced playwrights often need only the director or dramaturg, or neither, according to Potter. Storey cautions that an inexperienced playwright may not have the theatrical vocabulary or critical distance necessary to run his or her own workshop, particularly if he or she does not have a theatrical background. With inexperienced playwrights, Potter likes to use both director and dramaturg.

As Moher puts it, "a playwright learns [his or her] own process and how to use workshops in an appropriate way." The playwright learns two sets of skills that interweave: they learn more about how they write, and they learn more about how to use a workshop.

With as many of the appropriate skills and attitudes as possible, both inexperienced and experienced playwrights now face the workshop. However, before the workshop can begin, many elements must be known: Is the workshop to develop the play or the playwright? Will it be a production or a non-production workshop? Is it a one-time-only workshop, or part of a series? How long is the workshop? How long should it be? Knowing these elements, the playwright, director and dramaturg can decide specific goals for the workshop.

Before the workshop begins, organizational agendas must be clear: does the organization intend to develop plays or playwrights using production or non-production workshops? "Is a playwright working for a theatre, or a theatre working for a playwright? If the former, [the theatre] shouldn't do new plays." (Moher) Potter believes "the most important work at Workshop West is the development of playwrights not plays -- but you develop playwrights by developing plays." He adds that development always takes place on a spectrum from developing the play to developing the playwright weighted towards either end depending on the situation. Nelson defines the two types of workshop used by most theatre organizations: a non-production workshop helps or develops the playwright primarily, whereas a production workshop primarily helps develop the play for production. Ideally, according to Moher, playwrights should have access to both types of workshop.

Moher finds workshops to be a good development tool for young playwrights, provided that the dramaturg and/or director "guide [the playwright] with delicacy in and out of the process." A design component can be very useful for a beginning writer, since it "helps him think visually -- theatrically -- not linguistically." (Moher) Moher adds that workshops do not suit and will not help to develop all playwrights.

Potter thinks that workshops can be useful in developing playwrights, but not as useful as a production. Workshops can give "a taste of the story working, audience response, actors' work, [and] what happens in theatre." (Potter) He prefers not to use workshops as a basic training device. Develop scripts and then, secondarily but more importantly, develop playwrights, he suggests.

On the other hand, DeFelice prefers non-production to production workshops. "With the lower stakes in non-production workshops, more can be accomplished to develop the play and the playwright." (DeFelice) In production workshops, the playwright and dramaturg must be careful of deadline pressure forcing hurried rewrites, and director and actor performance pressure which can distort the playwright's vision of the play. DeFelice adds that he has, in such situations, "seen playwrights lose confidence in their plays." Nelson agrees that a production director can worry more about his job than the play, and this can be harmful. Both believe experience helps the writer deal with production pressures. According to DeFelice, experienced playwrights learn when to stop working on a piece, and save changes for next time. "Always assume that there will be a next time." (DeFelice) Further, Nelson advises the playwright to be confident, to trust in their work, and stand their ground, since "it's your [the playwright's] play. It's their [the director's] production, but it's your play."

However, Nelson prefers production workshops to non-production workshops. Acknowledging the obvious reason that he wants to be produced, Nelson, like Hinton, likes the attitude and energy of the interpretive artists in a production workshop. Nelson does not want to work hypothetically, but towards a "theatre event" rather than only towards a script. In non-production workshops, he finds that the others pay too much attention to him and not enough attention to doing their own jobs. For similar reasons, Potter is "not keen on non-production workshops." Van Heyst believes in behaving as if production is the end goal in either type of workshop:

> Even when there isn't [a production as a goal], I think that it serves the play well for everybody to act as if there's a production, as if this is part of a rehearsal process -- to be as serious about it as that. That doesn't mean that we should get locked in and behave as if 'Oh my God! There's an opening night in three weeks and we haven't got time to really delve into this. If there's major problems we can't address them because there isn't time.' That's bullshit. But I do think that when we conduct ourselves as if there will be a show, that enhances the possibility that there will be one. (Van Heyst)

Mann believes that in a non-production workshop, the participants focus on a product rather than a production. This focus leads to a "tendency to really bite down on a play, really critically respond, because you're saying, 'If you want it produced, then you [should do the following].'" (Mann) Mann also thinks that the participants tend to be easier on a play in production. He notes that in earlier years Edmonton workshops were criticized for being too nurturing. Perhaps "we have it reversed," Mann thinks; perhaps participants should nurture the inexperienced more in non-production workshops and be tougher on the experienced in productions. Mann agrees somewhat that

Edmonton probably still is too nurturing to an extent: "Sometimes you need a bit of a boot." (Mann)

Moher describes the two options in detail, laying out the benefits and detriments of the two models:

> The liability of the production model lies in producing a play before it's ready. Ideally, you should not have to go out on a limb to produce a play. You should be able to give it another year. Often it's left open as late as possible, but you have to guess if it will be ready. The liability to the laboratory model, though it gives you room to explore, lies in the greater danger of artists talking to each other and forgetting the public nature of the art form. An academy process can place form and experimentation over content. What's positive about the production model is that it's tied to the notion of putting plays on before an audience -- it makes the process more public. A positive in the laboratory situation is that you find new ways to do theatre. You need a R & D [research and development] of theatre. Although there may be too much R & D in Canadian Theatre at the moment. Theatre has become too private, internalized.

Knowing whether the play or playwright will be developed in a production or non-production workshop, the playwright can focus on preparation for the workshop. Storey, Hinton, and Nelson note that first the playwright must have the play ready for a workshop. Both Nelson and Storey use workshops as arbitrary deadlines. "Get as much as possible on paper in order to make the best use of the time," Storey advises. Hinton wants her work to be at a sharing stage. It can be raw, but it must be ready to share. Ideally, she adds, the play should be done a week in advance, then the playwright and director can decide upon having a workshop.

In order to arrange the workshop to fit the playwright's schedule, as Hinton prefers, the playwright must have a good relationship with the theatre organization, especially the director. Most agree that the playwright needs to establish, as noted in previous chapters, a trusting, working relationship with both the director and the dramaturg. Having done that, the triumvirate can begin planning the workshop. As part of the planning, they need to decide on the duration of the workshop. Heatley, Flaherty, Potter, Nelson, and Moher note that the triumvirate must consider the stage of development of the play when planning the length of the workshop. Nelson describes the relationship between the stage of development and the duration of the workshop as follows. Early, after the first draft, at the most the playwright needs to hear a reading, if that. In the middle of development, the playwright needs a big workshop. Near the end, the playwright doesn't need much, although a workshop could be used to prepare for a public reading. Moher agrees that playwrights need little assistance from workshops in early development, and he dislikes the tendency to lean on the workshop too early. This pattern generally holds true for isolated workshops after particular drafts or for a planned series of workshops coinciding with new drafts.

Generally, a workshop should be considered after the second draft with pre-workshop assistance provided by the dramaturg if necessary. To help the playwright through the phases of development, Moher suggests placing emphasis earlier on the playwright and dramaturg, and later on the workshop and director. For the first two drafts, just use a dramaturg who can run the first workshop after the second draft. At this point, let the playwright "talk and talk. It helps them identify what they're trying to say -- like psychoanalysis." (Moher) Textual analysis also helps the dramaturg and playwright identify main characters and structures, and potential options, without prescribing the play's development. After the third draft, a director becomes useful. At this point the playwright should begin to listen and observe more and more.

Potter also believes that the triumvirate should choose goals for the workshop depending on the stage of the play. Potter particularly believes that in the early stages of development of a play, the triumvirate, and the dramaturg in particular, should ask big questions of structure unless it has been agreed to leave these questions till later. After the structure has been "looked into," he normally uses the workshop to test the play for production and sometimes creates a model of the anticipated rehearsal process. In addition, later workshops can focus on the smaller questions such as polishing moments, although Potter recognizes that small changes can have large impacts on the "big picture" of the play.

Heatley and Flaherty add that the duration of the workshop depends on the stage of development of the play, and the ability, experience, and preference of the playwright. Now an experienced playwright, Storey wants only one day or half-day workshops in order to hear the play read once or twice. Hinton likes one- or two-day workshops that include reading the play, gaining familiarity with the text, digging more deeply, and perhaps suggesting some rewrites -- "then leave it." For a first draft, Moher wants only a reading and some debriefing, while for a second or third draft he likes to see actors' impressions of roles. Similarly, Massing wants a short workshop with a reading earlier, and to "see stuff on [its] feet," in a longer workshop later in development. Nelson comments that much of the time, economics influence the duration decision, but that he prefers three day workshops in the middle of play development. In a workshop, people have to "talk and talk in order to get to the big question. [The participants are] peeling away, looking, reading, and talking, and half-way through the second day -- 'bang' -- the big question."

(Nelson) After the bang, the workshop begins to be very valuable. Nelson adds that one-day workshops are still valuable, but that "you get what you can." Also, Potter likes to use shorter, one- or two-day, workshops since he worries, as do Flaherty and DeFelice, about playwright overload. DeFelice believes that a series of workshops can be the most beneficial since you do not have to try to do too much and you cannot possibly discover all in the individual workshop.

Finally, Van Heyst forcefully asserted in the "discussion" his belief concerning three days as the maximum duration for a workshop. The playwright should then know what to do. Nelson and Hinton stress that after three days, pressure increases to do rewrites within the workshop. They, as well as Massing, need time to absorb the input from the workshop, reflect, and critically distance themselves before rewriting. Moher adds that if he does rewrite, the workshop should be longer than three days.

Knowing all the variables of duration, the stage of the play, the preferences of the playwright, and the intent to develop the play or the playwright in a production or non-production workshop, the triumvirate can begin to plan the goal or goals and the structure of individual workshops. First, as Potter stresses, they should examine the four assumptions to make sure that the workshop will be useful. Then, ideally, the playwright guides the pre-workshop planning. If the playwright is unsure, the others should ask questions and offer suggestions.

"The first thing is what the playwright needs. Define what you expect to get out of a workshop." (Storey) Massing adds that the earlier in development the vaguer the goals, but that "goals are a key." Massing, Selman, and Hinton caution that the goal or goals should be flexible enough to respond to changing situations during the workshop. Later in development, Moher does not always like to set goals. When he is clear on the overall goals, he likes to be more intuitive and defer decisions until he hears the play read. Massing gives a summary of her pre-process gleaned from experience:

> A. Where is it [the play] at?
> B. What do I need to know to get to the next stage?
> C. What's the best way to get the information from [the] others?

Having finished her pre-process, Massing then meets with the director to communicate her intentions and to plan the structure of the workshop.

Structural planning usually includes conferring on the casting and the definition of each participant's particular role within that workshop. Mann emphasizes the importance, particularly for inexperienced playwrights, of precise pre-discussion. Clearly define the rules, roles, and goals, and make sure the playwright knows and remembers these plans.

Just before the workshop begins, the playwright should prepare herself for the workshop experience. The playwright moves from being alone to being in a group and this can be very unnerving. Hinton asks herself if she is ready or too vulnerable for the workshop. "It's like opening night. You have to prepare." (Hinton) At this point playwrights must prepare their skills and attitudes to help them remain open to receiving help from the workshop. One strategy that Storey uses is to prepare his "What-this-play-is-about speech." If discussion veers into areas of his concern, such as others giving him playwriting advice, he gives the speech and closes off the discussion so he can remain open to what the director and actors have to offer him.

Finally, the workshop begins. Hinton describes the playwright at the beginning as extremely vulnerable since the play will be "ripped out of [her] hands." Immediately upon entering the room, she tries to get comfortable by talking to actors and simply by being on time. She then wants the director, at least initially, to tell the actors exactly what is expected of them. Similarly, Storey tells actors what he expects from them at the beginning, specifically excluding playwriting advice. He likes to give his, "Why-am-I-wasting-people's-time speech?" Storey tells why he has written the piece, shares the impetus for it, and describes some source material. However, Massing does not like to shape the actors' responses. She prefers to treat all others like a first audience and see how they react to the play.

With a goal, and a structure to achieve it in place, the playwright brings her skills and attitudes to the work during the workshop. Particularly, she remains open and listens to the readings and other interpretive work, and the discussions following. The playwrights cite listening to the reading and the other interpretive work as the most valuable part of the workshop.

According to DeFelice, after getting over the "those-are-my-words" feeling, the playwright should listen carefully to the reading. He should listen to: the length of the story -- from the overall length to the length of sentences, the text, the rhythm, the visual possibilities, the power of the unspoken, the characters revealing information or acting without sufficient pressure, and the subtext or sense of life underneath the surface.

Storey believes in giving the actors just enough information to read well, such as a thumbnail sketch of the character, but he primarily wants to hear their take on the characters, and their reactions to the play. He does not want to give them too much information because he wants to know if they can find it in the text: "If it's not in the play, it's not in the play." Playwrights often "have an insecurity about what is playable," according to Storey. "Especially if you are the kind of writer who writes subtextual material. You want to be sure that people are not necessarily making the same choices every time, but [that they] are choosing choices of the same colour." (Storey)

Nelson advises, use the workshop to find out information you cannot discover by yourself. He listens for a sense of rhythm, including unnecessary repetition, for example. However, he finds it most valuable to get a sense of what he has asked the actors to do, and has asked the audience to listen to.

Hinton tries to hear it afresh as an audience member. She listens for the overall shape and flow, the rhythm, and the variety of tempo and pace. "Does it fit what you want? Will the audience feel it?" (Hinton) Finally, just after the reading ends, the playwright should listen to or feel the atmosphere in the room, Hinton notes. Were people moved or satisfied, or do they seem to be missing something?

With the playwright listening, the others can show the playwright what is there, and what is potentially there, without telling the playwright what to do, as Flaherty stressed in the "discussion." Nelson adds that the playwright needs to balance others' responses and performances with his own inner knowledge about the eventual "perfect" end product in order to judge the input. In an ideal situation, Nelson would just "listen, trusting them and myself."

Many participants note that the playwright often distances him or herself from the work and the group (and even the table) in order to focus on listening effectively to the reading and the discussion. Massing does not want to respond even if specifically asked for information. Rather than saying "I know! I know!" in response, she prefers to see the others try to piece it together and wrestle with their questions given the information from the script. In Nelson's experience, when the playwright talks, the others "glaze over", since they feel they cannot argue with the playwright.

During the discussion, the playwright should usually try to listen to others' comments and questions. Storey stresses that he only wants normal rehearsal questions. He wants to know if the actors or director are confused. Hinton listens to the general reaction first, and then to specific comments on character from the actors. She finds the initial reaction most informative, since the people with intense or emotional reactions will talk first: "It's scary, but a sign that they care. Often the most outlandish comments are the most useful. Something goes ping-ping in your head later on." (Hinton)

In addition, Moher, Nelson, Massing, and Hinton all take notes during the reading and discussion. Massing warns against taking too many notes and not paying attention. Nelson takes pages of notes of his thoughts and others' comments. Hinton, for example, sometimes uses a pen to note down key words, emotions, or images arising from discussion and saves them for later. Moher acknowledges that he takes many notes, but that he usually never looks at them again: he will remember the important ones.

The playwright can also take a more active role. Although she prefers to sit back, Massing will ask questions about the pre-decided goals. On the other hand, Storey controls all input, since he runs his own workshops. Nelson likes to be at the table and have questions directed to him, but he does not feel obliged to answer. As noted earlier, many, and particularly Potter and Heatley, agree that they want the playwright to hear questions, but not respond. According to Van Heyst, some playwrights prefer to sit back, but he prefers them to "get in the game" and actively discuss. Ideally, Selman wants the playwright to take a chance and collaborate. She knows some playwrights prefer not to be active, but she feels that if they participate, then everyone will have a more creative experience, and in turn, this will help the playwright more.

During the reading and discussion, the playwright will also exercise skills such as judgment, filtering, and differentiating performance from text. In addition, he or she will perform the other activities covered in more detail in the dramaturg and director chapters: debriefing at breaks and after each day, resisting overload, and maintaining the flexibility to change goals if pre-planned ones become fulfilled or prove impossible to achieve.

Finally, the participants hold widely differing views on the usefulness to the playwright of public readings. Hinton notes that the playwright never asks for them, but they can be useful. Massing, Moher, and Hinton particularly like to hear the reading, and the shape of the play in this atmosphere, provided the reading has been rehearsed. Hinton hates to see the failure of the play and the actors because of inadequate preparation. One of the reasons Storey does not like public readings is that a lack of real preparation causes the actors to apologize for or "bail out" on the material. Massing and Moher always find public readings worth the time spent preparing, but Hinton feels the time could be better spent elsewhere. Potter wants to spend the time on the playwright rather than on performance.

Generally, all like audience response during the reading. Storey does not like public readings, but thinks they can be useful as a market research tool to test audience response, provided that you get the appropriate test audience. In addition, Storey, Moher, and Massing believe that selecting an audience appropriate to the play's subject matter can make for a valuable audience response. For example, when workshopping Blue Trumpeter, a play in which schizophrenia plays a major role, Moher found that a selected audience which included many people with the illness and their family members resulted in a very informative audience response. Moher adds that he likes the public component of the readings because then the artists are not always "talking to each other," but he does not want them too early in a play's development. Massing warns that although she likes hearing the reading, "some plays don't read well, and some read better than they play." Audience response should be measured with that in mind.

Most find that the discussion after the reading is less useful. Storey will not submit to the "Q and A," but not out of a disdain for their opinion. He feels that inviting the audience to speak informally to the playwright, "takes the onus off the audience to be a performing seal, but still allows those who have been affected to share their feelings with the writer (and possibly buy them a drink)." Nelson prefers people writing down their responses, like the Alberta Theatre Projects (ATP) model. He can then sift through them later without feeling pressured. Further, he believes that writing forces the audience members to think more about their statements and removes the pressure of public speaking. Selman and Massing comment that often people with the best possible intentions give poor or damaging feedback. As a result, Massing does not like discussions after the reading. She has tried shaping the audience response with specific questions and found this method only somewhat effective. However, Selman, Flaherty, and Hinton believe that with a good moderator, the discussion can be usefully shaped. Moher describes the audience's input as a "potential double-edged sword." Hinton adds that after the reading, "Don't destroy the play from an emotional reaction: minimize damage, maximize constructiveness."

Nelson likes only to use public readings close to production to test the play, and he wants a discussion between the workshop participants after such a reading. Selman, in her article, stresses the importance of time after the public reading to debrief all the participants and find out what they have learned. (22)

Similarly, after the entire workshop, the dramaturg and the director debrief with the playwright. This debriefing includes "What next?" questions. If a future workshop or a production is the next step, then this meeting after a workshop can become the start of a new cycle of the next pre-workshop or pre-production meetings, depending upon the stage of development of the play. Some, like Storey, debrief at once: "[A] workshop is a fleeting, precious experience -- respond to it immediately." Others, such as Massing and Hinton, prefer to wait at least a week to debrief, allowing all three members of the triumvirate to assimilate and reflect on the input from the workshop. However, Massing goes through her notes immediately to make sure they make sense before putting them aside. In contrast, Nelson leaves his notes for six weeks or as long as possible. When he looks at them again, "the ones that don't make sense aren't important." Hinton and Nelson stress not touching the play again for a while and avoiding the pressure to rewrite. Using the energy gleaned from the workshop, Hinton works on other pieces. Moher agrees that two weeks' distance allows him to be quite critical. When they do rewrite, Nelson, Hinton, Moher, and Massing find that hearing the actors' voices and seeing the designers images or models, as well as their own original conceptions, can be of great assistance.

Since the workshop concentrates on the playwright, the playwright, not surprisingly, has the most needs of the workshop and the other participants, both as a group and as individuals. Nelson noted in the "discussion" how many variables the individual workshop must take into account: ranging from the stage of the play to the individual playwright's tastes. Underlying these variables, the playwright must want or need the workshop to assist him or her in the development of the play. If the playwright does not want or need the workshop, the workshop is futile. "I need a workshop when I'm stuck (Hinton)."

Within the workshop, the playwright needs certain attitudes and skills from the other players. Potter, Storey, Nelson, Haynes, and Skelton all feel that a familarity with and trust of the others help the playwright focus on the work and not be defensive. In particular, Nelson wants to know that he can work with the people in the workshop. If they understand the playwright's language, concerns, and influences, then the players and the playwright have a shorthand communication. Otherwise they must all spend a great deal of time establishing the means to communicate effectively.

Most of the playwrights, as well as Haynes and Ertman, stress that to foster good communication workshop participants should focus on doing their own jobs. Neither Nelson nor Storey want others' playwriting suggestions. Further, many believe that the participants should treat the text as sacrosanct: as in a normal rehearsal with a fixed text. "It would be sort of like looking at somebody's painting that's unfinished. Taking one look at it and saying, 'Is that the way it's going to be?' That's insulting. You owe respect to the playwright and to the work." (Haynes) According to Ertman, the workshop works best as a mini-production wherein people do their jobs and let the playwright see, hear, and judge. Hinton and Massing expect all to be expert at their own jobs and to be able to act as an audience. "It's valuable to have ten people respond [as an audience] to the question the play poses." (Massing)

During discussion, the playwright needs to hear a balance of positive and negative comments, advise Heatley, Hinton, Massing, Mann, and Grieve. Hinton does not want "Yes people", while Grieve cautions that people sometimes say things to a playwright that no director, actor, or designer would ever tolerate. The discussion should be somewhere between "pussyfooting and a whinefest." (Massing) Heatley wants the group to be "positive, not 'pollyanna'. If [the playwright] thinks the play is about violence and death and the thing that everybody's talking about as the most memorable moment is the warm and fuzzy in Act Two. You [the playwright] hear the feedback and then you make the decision." Haynes adds that personality conflicts and a tug-of-war of ideas do not help the playwright. As Storey says, you only have time to indulge the playwright in the workshop.

One reason that the playwright should be indulged rather than the other participants is that the playwright has certain needs dealing with what I shall call the passive and active effects of the workshop upon the playwright. I designate as passive effects the playwright using the readings or stagings to hear the play and test ideas. Moher suggests, for example, waiting for the workshop to hear/see if something works. He feels these passive tests are good solutions, since they cannot be arrived at intellectually: "hearing it read tells you how to change [it]". On the other hand, active effects arise from unexpected new insights from the interpretive work as well as from the questions and comments of others in discussion. According to Pearson, young writers sometimes have trouble dealing with active effects. They try to absorb all the input and write completely new material in response. In turn, the new material receives a different response and the process can be unending. Moher adds, "[You] can be pushed in workshops to make things fairer [to everyone]. [It's] probably a bad thing. Actors want to be likeable. Directors want more exploration. Actors want their best self to be seen." Potter notes that the playwright must find a balance between his own needs and the pressures of others' needs.

To help her achieve a passive/active balance, the playwright needs certain attitudes, actions, and abilities from the others as individuals: dramaturgs, directors, designers, and actors. The dramaturg should be a friend and ally of the playwright, to whom the playwright can talk and relate, while the director relates to the other interpretive artists. In addition, both Moher and Hinton caution that playwrights who act as dramaturgs for other playwrights must be particularly self-effacing. Moher recommends that they "get coffee" and deliberately show themselves to be "low status." The playwright needs the dramaturg to know the playwright's work and invest in the play by trying to see the playwright's intentions balanced against the present play. The dramaturg helps the playwright assess passive effects, and resist overt active effects. According to Flaherty, Nelson, and Mann, a dramaturg/playwright relationship is similar to a director/actor relationship. Each must understand how the other works: the dramaturg helps the playwright make exterior and concrete his inner vision just as a director helps an actor explore and enhance a performance. The playwright needs the dramaturg to offer another perspective:

> It's just getting out of your head, because things get so confused. You've thought the same thought 500 times and you don't know any more whether it's valuable. You really get a sense of what's there and what isn't, if you talk to somebody who can give you a clean, objective, professional, informed, intelligent point of view. (Nelson)

The dramaturg's perspective can help the playwright to sort out his or her vision of the play, especially the eventual end-product. Moher notes that such a "skilled, learned, informed dramaturgical response" can come from the dramaturg or the director.

The director can fulfill many of the same needs as the dramaturg, and other needs as well. The director should be self-effacing in terms of imposing his or her own vision. The playwright needs a "conservative" director, not a "radical" director who will create too many active pressures on the playwright. Especially since, historically, playwrights did not need directors at all, and often directed their own first productions, the director should tread warily in imposing any of his or her own vision of the play. The unspoken tradition in Canadian Theatre, according to Flaherty, is that first productions are for the playwright: "[the director should] make the play as exciting and spectacular as possible, but from the play. [You] have to find out if the play works period." (Flaherty) However, provided the director finds out what the playwright wants and shares power, Hinton "write[s] to be interpreted, and the director is the chief interpreter."

According to Storey and Nelson, neither should the designer limit the playwright's imagination with a particular design vision or lack thereof. Instead of such negative active effects, the playwright needs positive ones from the designer to "stimulate new thoughts," (Skelton) and provide "a new way of looking at things." (Nelson) Selman, Nelson, and Van Heyst also stress the stimulation a designer gives the playwright: "It gets me turned on." (Nelson) The playwright needs the designer to give him or her a visual sense of the play, including possible designs, space, and atmosphere, many players note. Massing thinks that a new visual vocabulary can be provided by the designer. According to Moher, this new vocabulary or way of thinking forces the analytical playwright to think in a different way and work subconsciously. Designers who help with non-naturalistic stage conventions can be especially valuable, Van Heyst notes. In addition, he comments that playwrights often take design work home and reflect upon the images.

Massing cites an example in which she took home a model and wrote the play to the model, a particularly active effect. As Moher puts it, "image can become text." Heatley observes that the designer's visual reading, like the actors' verbal reading, stays with the playwright as they rewrite.

Nelson and Hinton both comment on a strong sense of character from the actors, helping them when rewriting the play. Many want the actors to be experts in their characters, during both reading and discussion. Actors should be able to discuss throughlines, according to Nelson, Moher, and Haynes. Haynes adds that the actor should follow his or her own throughline during reading or staging: "[the actor should] go where the playwright asks you to go." (Haynes) The playwright and the dramaturg can then use the actors as tools to provide passive effects which will fuel their discussion afterwards.

Chapter Four: The Actor

> You sometimes will play things in a certain way, make assumptions that may be completely wrong, that will slant the play in an odd direction. I guess it makes the case for playwrights trying to make plays as actor proof as possible. (Mann)

Many playwrights talk about surviving workshops. Almost invariably they refer to withstanding the actors' comments. Betty Jane Wylie and John Lazarus both wrote sections of "A Playwright's Guide to Workshop Survival" in CTR's NPD issue. Wylie said, "The trouble with actors is that they are focused on their own part. In the long run, this attitude may not serve your play. Actors have perfected, albeit unconsciously, a survival technique that says 'augment your part or die'....You have to learn to separate self-seeking from play analysis, or you will end up with a butler who is the star of the play." (25) Lazarus added that, "if those actors who are so glibly criticizing your play could write plays better than you can, then they would not be actors, they would be playwrights. Believe it or not, being a playwright is the better gig. The pay and job security are about the same -- laughable -- but at least you don't have to do warmups." (29) Also in that issue Brian Brennan reviewed the evolution of the workshop process at Banff, then under the direction of John Murrell, to the point where they asked the actors to "function essentially as paid readers and leave the dramaturgical comments to those asked to function in that capacity." (35)

Why is there such cynicism about the role of the actor in the workshop process? Is it justified? Does the answer to the playwrights' concern about the actors' function in the workshop lie in, as the Banff decision suggests, more clearly and exactly defining the actor's role? Am I loading the dice on the discussion of the actor's role in the workshop by focusing on the negative first?

In describing the power structure of a workshop, Skelton says, "Suggesting a food chain is probably not totally accurate. Everybody's got a job of importance. Well, the actors are at the bottom." However, if the actor is the "bottom" of the hierarchy, then they are the foundation as well. Without the actors, there would be no workshop. Furthermore, the way actors work or are used determines the type of workshop experience. Actors Blair Haynes, David Mann, and Val Pearson, as well as the other players, "spoke" about the role of the actor.

> HAYNES: The actor's job is always to do what the director wants. They [directors] define the role of the actor in a workshop.
>
> MANN: My experience has varied: from simply doing a cold reading of a play that you haven't had a chance to look at before; to having a look at the play ahead of time to get some idea of your character and then doing a reading

and then going away; to being asked very specific questions by a dramaturge or director about the character that I was playing; to being asked to improvise around scenes that have been written...by the director or the dramaturge or the playwright; to being asked to respond critically to anything in the play -- a wide-open discussion of the dramatic content and structure and everything.

POTTER: I say to actors -- a lot of actors worry that they don't have dramaturgical skills or something when they're asked to sit in a workshop -- I always say, 'just act. You don't have to give brilliant comments. If you just act it as well as you can, you're going to tell us a lot, show us a lot.' That's important, a role that isn't well dealt with can mislead a playwright a great deal.

NELSON: Each actor is in charge of the character or characters that they're playing. They're almost like specialists for that role, and they can concentrate on that and be specific about things that you can't when you're dealing with the whole big picture. I don't like to get into dramaturgical sessions with the actors, but I like them to respond to specific questions.

SELMAN: A good workshop actor takes over [the] character and follows [his or her] journey. They make an immediate choice to play the character actively [and] get there after the first read.

MOHER: Actors are good at helping to flesh out the characters. They ask key questions or say,'I don't get this.' This will lead to making the character richer. This is mostly the contribution [that] the actor makes.

FLAHERTY: The actor's job is to embody the character and fall over where they should fall over. Sometimes [an] actor can make it work too much and blind the playwright.

DEFELICE: [Yes. The actor should be] trying to interpret the role, but not overpower the role. It's hard to say, 'don't be so brilliant,' but I think there is a time when you're in a way presenting the words not enacting, so that we hear the best approximation of the play we can, not diminished and not enhanced.

PEARSON: I think there are two schools of thought on that. Some people say that the actor shouldn't provide the gap, that you should read it absolutely as writ. And if it doesn't work or the truth of it can't be found, they should be able to hear it when you read it, because you don't help them [playwrights] by making transitions. The other school of thought is that you do it, and you do the transitions, and that they will see that the amount of time it takes to make the transition means that it requires more than what's there. That's how I tend to go. I tend to work towards making the text work as opposed to showing the playwright where he's missing it. Because I don't believe it's the actor's right to judge the text, especially on first reading.

HAYNES: My main job is to try to make what's there work, and only by really attending to that can you really find out what's not there. Only when you really try to make the play work like a play, can you tell the difference between your limitations and what's -- plain and simple -- not there.

MANN: Realistically, any time a play is done the actors are going to be trying to make it work. So to just sit back and read without trying to make those things work, I think maybe doesn't serve the playwright as well. You could read it yourself and know that much. You learn more from seeing somebody who's good at what they do, try and do it the best they can. Then you're more likely to recognize a problem as being dramaturgical as opposed to something in the performance of it.

SELMAN: Some actors make anything work. They read really well, and they invest subtext when it may or may not be there, and they quite instantly read actively. You can go away saying, 'That really worked. That worked better than I thought.' [I have] no complaints about that kind of actor, but actually sometimes [with] someone who will more overtly reveal, 'now I need to understand how to get from there to there, before I can read it well for you,' you see the workings. That's really useful to a playwright.

MASSING: One of the very best actors that I've ever worked with in a workshop was great because he does a good strong take on a character in a cold read so can cover a multitude of sins. But he's also very aware of, can make a writer aware of, what gaps he's covering. It's the best of both worlds, because he gave you a great reading of where the scene could be with some depth, but also lets you know that another time you might not be so lucky. As long as they can tell you what they're covering, otherwise the second type is preferable: the kind who just works with what's there.

STOREY: I also think, and this is going to sound terrible, that it doesn't always help to have a brilliant actor in your workshop. To use an example of David Fox as a workshop actor, David is brilliant. The problem with David is that he is so inventive that, if he's reading the part, you'll never know that the fault in the script lies in his character. I mean he could make the phone book work dramatically. I like to have good actors, but not people who are renowned as tour de force performers.

HAYNES: If I was having a play of mine workshopped, I would want an actor like David Fox, because you're going to be able to see the stuff come to life, and yes it's hard to see the weaknesses with such great actors. But I think that in the end, you can see the structure better.

NELSON: That's kind of a cynical statement really. The idea of [someone] being too good an actor is a bit cynical and not really true, because if she's found something it's probably there. And if she has found something that isn't there, and if she's putting something into it, then as a playwright or as a director or as a dramaturg you have the responsibility to say, 'Where is this coming from?' I think that you [actors] really do have to try and make it work. I mean, that's why I'm there.

According to the participants, it seems that the actor's role should be defined by the director, but what type of role should the director define? There appears to be a general agreement that, usually, the actor should focus on the character or characters they are playing, but not always: "It depends on what stage, what draft it is, what they want to get out of it, and it depends also on what kind of actors you have, what kind of skills that are there." (Haynes) Sometimes the triumvirate want the actors just to act, other times to act and comment on character, and occasionally to act, comment on character, and comment more generally on such things as structure.

Disagreement persists over "the two schools of thought" between "enhanced" and "as is" performance. Just as the problem-solver director can package flaws so can the virtuoso actor cover gaps. Storey, DeFelice, and Flaherty all want actors to do what's there and no more, while the actors and Nelson feel that the actor must try to make it work to the best of their ability. Selman likes the virtuoso actor, but feels that an actor who needs help to bridge gaps may be more useful to the playwright. Perhaps Massing's actor who both enhances the text and makes the playwright aware of the enhancement would be ideal. However, such an actor requires a particular combination of skills and attitudes.

I will examine the skills and attitudes needed by the workshop actor and in particular those needed by Massing's "ideal actor". I will look at attitudes, attitudes and skills combined, and skills -- particularly the combination of intellect and instinct -- that help the actor play his or her role in the workshop.

The director helps guide the actor to one of her primary attitudes: treating the text as fixed or sacrosanct. Pearson, Haynes, Nelson, and Selman stress the importance of the actor giving this respect to the play and the playwright. "If you go in with the attitude that it's a flawed work, you look at the flaws. When I get a new script, it's useful to take a look at it as though it's a finished play. I like to go in and say, 'What is there?', as opposed to, 'What's not there?'" (Haynes) However, Moher notes that during the workshop there often is not time to treat the text as fixed and that the actors should presume that the play is not perfect and should offer comments that the playwright can assess. Nevertheless, actors should treat the play and playwright with respect. Selman notes that good actors who treat the text with this respect open the playwright to their input and to the overall workshop.

As a part of this respect the actors should be open to rather than blocking the work through prejudgment, lack of effort, or inflexibility about ideas. The actors, Selman, Flaherty, and Hinton cite openness as a desirable attitude in the actor. "Don't give me any rigid thinkers. A strong as [an] actor may be I don't want him working or her working if they're so opinionated, or such a prima donna, or they can only do one thing, or if their politics are too strong, or whatever." (Flaherty) Again, players can usually agree on what should be excluded if not included from the workshop structure. Both Pearson in the "discussion" and Haynes above stressed not prejudging the work or "looking for flaws." According to Pearson, "you have to approach the text as though it were written in stone, not be prejudging it on the basis of it being new." Neither should the actor fail to work hard enough, waiting for the playwright either to fix the play or to tell the actor what to do, adds Haynes. Nelson and Potter also stress the actor doing their normal hard work with the text. The actor should not get stuck on little details or on motivation, add Haynes and Mann. According to Haynes, the actor needs the ability or attitude to say yes. "You need to have that ability to go 'well life is stranger than this,' [and] accept that this is the way it must happen and who's to say it can't happen. Try." (Haynes)

All the attitudes covered so far fall under the general category of having respect for the play and through the play to the playwright. Other attitudes focus specifically on respecting the playwright. Both Selman and Potter want the actor to have a sensitivity to what the playwright is trying to do. Hinton wants the actor to support the play and the playwright. Particularly, Mann mentions not trying to write the play for the playwright. He also thinks the actor should edit him or herself since not all comments will be useful to the playwright. The actor should try to offer selected, useful comments.

As Haynes notes, part of this respect comes from the actor being aware of his place in the hierarchy of the workshop and of the overall purpose of the workshop to help the playwright: "You're not just workshopping a play, you're workshopping a person [the playwright]. It's a very fragile process. It's like working on somebody's baby. Overall, the responsibility of the actor is to service the playwright in whatever way you [the actor] can. The more you know about the writer, the more you know how to best serve them. The workshop is not for actors. You're providing a service." DeFelice cautions the actor not to place him or herself above or superior to the text and showoff his or her intellect at the expense of the playwright. Selman, Massing, and Hinton all want the actors to be honest and blunt if necessary, but, as Selman notes, "there are two ways to be honest." They, along with Haynes, Mann, Potter, and Van Heyst, would like the actors to be positive and constructive. Selman and Pearson particularly stress that actors who find working on new work thrilling are a great asset. Pearson further notes that, with the right attitude, new work can be very rewarding:

> Working on new plays is an extremely rewarding thing for an actor, because there's something really exciting about being the first one to breathe air into a character's personality and make it stand up and walk and talk. And there are no preconceived ideas about it, either, which is quite freeing as an actor. (Pearson)

Some abilities needed by the actor could be described as a combination of attitudes and skills. The actor needs to be willing and able to commit to the play, to take risks, to make and commit to choices, and to be flexible enough to then change and commit to new choices. All the actors and several others stress the actor committing to the work. As a part of this commitment, the actor should take risks and be willing to both "leap [in] with both feet" (Pearson) and take "big leaps." (Massing) Further, Pearson and Massing note that actors should commit and make these leaps, at least temporarily, even though their choices might be wrong and misleading[9].

According to DeFelice, the ability to "make choices and commit yourself to choices," is a key. Nelson also wants actors to make big strong choices. Haynes adds that the actor needs to be willing and able to make temporary but specific commitments to choices. According to Haynes the actor should: make a choice, recognize it as an early choice, be willing to be wrong, but nonetheless commit to that specific choice for the moment.

As Haynes notes, the actor has to be flexible enough to both make and commit to choices and then be willing and able to change and commit to new choices. "The actor has to...be willing to make radical changes in those choices in subsequent readings. Flexibility is very important." (DeFelice) The actors, DeFelice, Selman, Nelson, Massing, and Van Heyst all stress the flexibility of the actor. This relates back to not blocking the work by prejudging it, being willing to change, and being able to change quickly. Haynes notes that an improvisational flexibility would be useful, while Pearson suggests that this flexibility is similar to that needed to work in radio drama. Mann likens flexibility to versatility: the ability to play a range of characters helps an actor, and therefore the workshop. The blurring of the line between flexibility as a skill or an attitude supports Grieve's belief that for the actor, attitude is a skill.

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[9] In "Table Stakes," page 30, Flaherty gives the example of the actor Paula Wing committing to first one choice and then another. Flaherty comments on the importance of both the committment and the flexibility. If Wing had stuck with the first choice the playwright, a neophyte playwright, would likely have been misled.

Most players mention an actor skill particularly necessary in the workshop: "They have to accelerate their process. An actor in a first rehearsal of a play in a full rehearsal period is not going to shoot off all the guns, and blow all the whistles, and ring all the bells. Sometimes in a workshop the actor has to on the first read be doing the first read, and by the second read be done the first week of a normal rehearsal process." (DeFelice) Heatley agrees that the actor must take a "fast track" by making quicker, faster grabs at the character. Skelton cautions that this quickness helps, but that the actor never gets beyond a certain superficiality in the workshop. Haynes does not like the term quick: "Quickness is not the right word. [I wish] not to confuse quickness with facileness. I suppose intelligence or a kind of intelligence that can quickly accomplish and absorb the ideas of the play would be more accurate." Mann suggests, and Selman agrees, that intelligence helps the actor to accelerate his or her process, but not as much as experience.

However, Selman also cautions that certain actors have individual processes that do not help as much in the workshop. "Wonderful actors that really have to just work from the inside are not as good in a workshop, marvelous as they are." (Selman) Nelson also notes that actors who can be brilliant in performance can be terrible in the workshop, if, for example, they have a slow deliberately neutral process at first. The actor must have a quick enough process because that allows him or her to serve the playwright better:

> If your process is one that requires a lot of time with the script to be able to get results. If you have a process where you don't like to make decisions, you put off decisions as long as possible. That kind of process is not that useful in a workshop. You have to be able to work deeply and fast enough so that you can get the kind of work out there that's going to be most useful. You can't use up all your workshop time doing your actor stuff. You've got to be able to quickly get to the good stuff. Until you get to the good stuff the playwright's just waiting." (Haynes)

As a part of the actor's process, almost all mention the ability to read well as an important skill for the actor. "The ability to take words off the page in a fluent way is not always easy." (DeFelice) Massing and Nelson note particularly that they want good cold readers, while Van Heyst wants actors who can pronounce words and deal with foreign languages and dialects well. Flaherty adds that, depending on the play and the workshop, a facility with dialects can be essential when trying to find the musicality and rhythm suitable to a role and a play. Moher is not as concerned about word perfect reading of text as he is about "actors who can't find the rhythm, musicality, pace, and shape of it [the play]." (Moher) Haynes notes that "it's always helpful to be a 'quick read' so that you can see the line and engage the other actors. If you can't look up from your page then there are certain things that are never going to come to life." Listening to the other actors and the stage directions can be an equally important skill, adds Pearson. Both Haynes and Pearson suggest that the abilities to read and listen relate to the ability of the group to work as an ensemble during the reading. Potter, Van Heyst, and Skelton also comment on the need for the actor to work well in the group. The actors need to work well as a group on two levels: as an ensemble during the reading or performance of the text, and as team players during the overall workshop, including discussion. Finally, Selman adds that actors who read well can focus on an active reading of the character that follows the throughline or journey of the character through the play. Storey agrees that actors who have this good facility for storytelling when reading can help the playwright, depending on the play.

As noted in the "discussion", Moher, Nelson, and Selman, as well as Haynes, Potter, and Skelton, believe that the actor's main role is to focus on the character or characters they are playing. Therefore, the actor's ability to focus on and build characters is important. Selman wants actors who can mark a character's rhythm and type quickly. Haynes, Potter, and Skelton emphasize the actor's ability to find and follow throughlines including motivations and superobjectives. Many want the actor to be able to talk about finding or not finding the throughlines. Ideally, an actor will be able to articulate his or her process.

Haynes, Selman, and Massing suggest that being able to articulate process requires a kind of intelligence. According to Selman, good workshop actors have an intelligence that allows them to see what is there and what is not. Further, this type of actor can tell why he or she knows or does not know how to go from here to there in the character's journey. Actors with this kind of intelligence can both do the role and observe what they are doing, allowing for a kind of objectivity on the character on whom they are focused and on the play in general. Massing thinks that a certain detachment allows the actor's analytical skills to operate. The actor can then give the playwright a different perspective.

Several participants note that actors who have good analytical skills are useful in a workshop. Potter adds this is true in the abstract, but that sometimes the actors will not need good analytical skills. Haynes wants actors with an active curiosity who will dig deeper into the play, see more of the overall picture. Actors with good analytical skills can perceive the message and structure of the play, notes Haynes. Nelson, Haynes, and Selman agree that the ability to perceive overall structure and message helps the actors with their main focus: character. Such actors can see their parts in relation to the whole and can offer this viewpoint to the playwright. For example, "if the central theme is about blank, [the actor asks] how does my character feed blank." (Selman) Nelson adds that actors who understand the whole can make good specific character choices that support the overall structure or big picture. Mann wants actors who are interested in how plays work or the overall structure of plays, in workshops, but notes that actors in production do not need this ability.

In addition, Storey, Potter, Hinton, Selman and Skelton note that actors who have good instincts can be very useful in a workshop. Selman likes actors who enjoy a leap into the unknown. Actors who see or feel the potential in the script and act on it can help the playwright, adds Potter. The actor's creativity with the character can assist the playwright's creativity with the play. Skelton wants a balance. He wants instinctive as well as intellectual actors in order to feed the playwright in both ways: "You want someone who can react to a feeling. You want someone also who can analyze other points. You want to ride a line." (Skelton)

Skelton, Hinton, Haynes, and Mann ideally want this balance within the individual actor. "The perfect thing is intuitiveness working with an analytical intelligence. You [the actor] want to be able to think linearly and horizontally at the same time." (Haynes) Mann also thinks this balance is ideal provided that the playwright can handle the input. Hinton adds that she would prefer both, but if she had to choose, she would choose an actor with good instincts in order to hear them in the reading. Massing's ideal actor, who can give an inspired performance that enhances the text as well as comment on the inspiration and enhancement, would have to combine instinctive and analytical skills. This actor would have to "ride a line" within him or herself.

Many players add that experience both as actors in general and as actors with workshops in particular can assist the actor in helping the workshop. DeFelice notes that there is a good large body of experienced workshop actors in Edmonton. This experience helps them with different skills and attitudes. For instance, DeFelice believes that such actors can filter or edit their input more helpfully for the playwright. He also believes that experienced actors can offer a great deal on character, if asked, in discussion. Haynes adds that experienced actors can identify and ask actor questions and bigger questions of the play more quickly. Experience also teaches the actor the timing and shaping of questions for the playwright. The actor learns to be sensitive to the needs of the play and the playwright.

Prior to the workshop, the actors should do "classic actor homework" (Skelton), provided they get the script. At this point the actor needs to be careful to treat it like any other play, according to Pearson and Haynes. Ideally, Haynes wants the script three or four days before the workshop: enough time to identify acting basics like wants and obstacles. Mann thinks the actor should look at the play, know the character he or she will read, and have some ideas about the play and the character, but not make hard or set choices. DeFelice adds that if you want feedback from the actors in addition to their readings or performances, you must give them the script as soon as possible before the workshop. However, there are times that the actor does not get the script prior to the workshop, either because of time constraints or because the playwright, director and dramaturg have decided upon a cold read.

At the beginning of the workshop, immediately prior to the reading, the triumvirate, usually through the director, can give the goals and parameters of the workshop to the actor. Potter and Flaherty both like the actor to know his or her function in the workshop from the beginning. Pearson, Haynes, and Mann also prefer to have the parameters stated openly:

> For one thing it helps me, as I'm reading the play, to know that certain types of questions are going to be asked so I can be watching for signposts of particular concerns that they want to deal with. And also, to some extent, it takes some of the pressure off, because otherwise you come to the end of the reading and you don't know, 'What next?' (Mann)

Otherwise, Haynes suggests that the actors look and listen for ground rules and guidelines implied by the triumvirate during the workshop, as it is important for the actor to know his or her role and what is expected. In particular, the triumvirate should make a decision about the "two schools of thought" and communicate that decision directly or indirectly to the actor, so that the actor knows what is expected in performance. Also, ground rules for discussion will let the actor know whether she should speak, and if so, what she should focus on, and how she should communicate her input to the playwright.

The workshop almost always begins with a reading. One of the first decisions the triumvirate makes is whether or not they want a cold reading from the actors. Given a choice, the actors do not seem to like cold reads. Haynes notes that in such a reading he is too busy focusing on bringing the character to life to be able to comment upon the character and play after the reading. He cannot both read and observe what he is doing. Mann more strongly states, "I never thought a cold reading was particularly useful. I know there are playwrights and directors who like them and I, for the life of me, cannot fathom why." In a cold reading the actor is more likely to be nervous, to make poor assumptions, and to figure out ten pages later how they should have been reading, according to Mann.

Storey, Hinton, and Nelson agree that they do not like completely cold readings either. Storey compares the first reading to a first day of rehearsal reading: it should be unrehearsed, but not unknown. He tries to get actors the script the night prior to the workshop. Hinton likes the actors to have the script before because she does not want stumbling during the reading. Nelson thinks that a comprehensive view of the whole can assist the actor in reading a particular part: "I don't think that a play is a surface thing. The first line is informed by the last." (Nelson)

On the other hand, Massing prefers the experience of and the information from cold readings:

> I prefer a cold read, assuming that it's a good cast of people who are used to doing good cold reads. Part of it's just that it's fun for me to hear them experience it for the very first time. It's fun to have that freshness. Also I think it's another source of information to me. What kind of take do I get on it from them? What's their approach just given the information they have there and with a split second decision.

However, Massing adds that on certain occasions she will give a capsule character sketch to the actors prior to the reading, and that on rarer occasions, depending on the play, cold readings do not work. If the play contained a great deal of dialect, she would not ask for a cold reading. In addition, sometimes, for a first draft when all she wants is to hear a good clear read, Massing will give the script to the actors prior to the reading.

Beginning with the reading, and guided by the ground rules, the actor applies his or her skills and attitudes during the workshop. Generally the actor performs during the workshop, often discusses this performance, and sometimes discusses the overall play. In a performance such as a reading, "the actor is the interpreter or the life-giver, the one who breathes life or air into the words." (Pearson) Most players, including all the actors, want the actor to do his or her "job" of performance in the workshop. Haynes, Storey, and Nelson in particular want the actor to follow the playwright's intent for the character and try to make sense of the role. Again, the "two schools" come into play. The actors all note that they follow the second school and try to do their jobs by making the text work. However, Flaherty believes that the actors do their jobs by allowing the playwright and dramaturg to see them "bump into walls."

During the reading or performance in the workshop the actor applies such skills and attitudes as treating the play like a fixed text, reading, listening, acting in an ensemble, building characters, making choices, committing to the choices at least temporarily, being open, being flexible, committing to the play including being willing to take risks, and accelerating his or her own process. Mann describes good readers as willing and able during the reading to jump in, take on the character, take leaps, do what is possible, and then change completely. Haynes adds that ensemble acting is crucial, because the actors need to communicate to each other in order to understand the relationships between characters and the flow of the play. This allows actors to go further, get more ideas, have more depth, and understand the play better. Potter notes that exploring the play is one of the main tasks of the actor. He adds that one of the risks actors take is adjusting from the "safeness" of a developed script and actively committing to a script in development during the workshop. Actors' committing to choices within the workshop can add a layer for the playwright even if they ultimately do not work for the character and/or the play, notes Pearson. Both Pearson and Heatley cite the ability to stand the play up and do some blocking as part of the actor's flexibility and accelerated process. Potter wants quickness from actors in regular rehearsals as well as workshops, but notes that this acceleration is crucial in workshops. The actor may be asked to be as close as possible to performance on first reading, Pearson explains. In addition, Selman notes that an actor who can accelerate his or her process in order to give an active reading during the first reading, allows the playwright, dramaturg, and director to see where the play is active or inactive.

The actor's role during the workshop also depends upon the duration of the workshop. Mann likes to have a few chances to read the text during the workshop, depending on the duration. In a short workshop of one or two days, the actors can read the text, respond to scenes in discussion, get some director input and "go for it" in a subsequent reading, according to Haynes. Heatley notes that in a longer workshop, after the actor has had more time to work on the script, the triumvirate can ask the actors to give more qualitative responses to the play as well as to his or her character.

Actors also apply both instinct and intellect during the workshop in general and the reading in particular. To give a strong reading, as particularly desired in a shorter workshop, instinct is probably more important, as Hinton notes. The application of intellect during the reading includes the actor focusing on character and structure, and overseeing his or her own process. Then, especially in a longer workshop, the information gleaned can then be applied to any discussion, and further to subsequent readings. Skelton adds that the actor usually focuses on character and thus can give more detail in a smaller scope, but that also the actor can look through character to structure. Looking at structure does not usually happen in an ordinary rehearsal process, according to Haynes. He adds that actors often look at builds within scenes in particular, and the play in general. Further, as a shorthand to assist in analyzing structure, Haynes notes that it is quite acceptable in a workshop for the actor to ask background questions about character and given circumstances that he would have to discover in a rehearsal:

> As you go through the workshop, if the play is like a big puzzle, you lay the puzzle out once, and then generally you go through the play and pick up each piece of the puzzle in a scene by scene examination. It's a bit like picking up each piece of the puzzle, seeing what it is, what are the sides of it, what are the questions, and then putting it back together to see if all the pieces fit the way the playwright hopes they will. (Haynes)

During discussion, the actor, if asked, offers input gleaned from the reading, while using skills and attitudes such as not prejudging the play, being positive, supporting the play and playwright, being aware of her place in the workshop, articulating analytic skills, and being constructively honest. Many players note that most frequently the actor focuses on his or her character or characters in discussion. "I don't like to get into dramaturgical sessions with the actors, but I like them to respond to specific questions: anything from 'What would you imagine your character wearing?' to 'Were there any logic problems? Did you contradict yourself?'" (Nelson)

Haynes offers a summary of his process. He applies himself and his expertise during the reading, while keeping an eye on problem points which he will articulate later. Both Pearson and Haynes stress that the actor must do his or her own job and get to know the play before offering any comments. However, Haynes adds that if the actor feels strongly enough about a problem, the actor should make an observation. Mann cautions the actor not to make suggestions to the playwright on how to change the play, but to say things that may be hard for the playwright to hear -- as long as the comments are focused on what is there. Mann also notes that the actor should comment constructively and focus on the positive before being dramaturgically tough. There is not much virtue in asking actors who are not strong dramaturgically to comment, Moher adds. Potter, Haynes, Mann, Flaherty, Grieve, and Massing specifically underline the value of an honest constructive approach from the actor during discussion.

As well as a focus on and response on character, discussion can include actors' comments ranging from the playability of certain moments to general statements about the play. Pearson notes that it is not the actor's responsibility to control input in a discussion, but that the actor should be prepared to stop if asked. As an example, Haynes suggests that actors can comment on playability by asking questions about such things as the need for repetitions of lines or ideas, provided the actor does not belabour the point. As Heatley notes, the actor should try to ask questions rather than make comments, and the playwright does not have to answer those questions. Grieve adds that sometimes the best action for the actors is silence. Massing wants the actors to respond generally to the play as though they were audience members. Mann acknowledges that the playwright can get some good feedback, but warns that this could lead to free-for-alls. Trouble usually arises in free-for-alls during discussion, according to Mann. The actors should be careful not to gang up on the playwright, making the playwright feel as if he or she is in a tiger pit. Further, Mann and Ertman note that the actor's internal process makes it difficult for him to respond externally as an audience member. Mann thinks that the character the actor reads inevitably influences his view of the play and responses to the play.

Often actors who are good workshop actors, who have good workshop skills and attitudes in reading and discussion, will be chosen rather than actors suitable for performing the role in production. Nelson, Massing, Storey, and Moher agree that actors unsuitable for the part can be useful in the workshop.

> Sometimes I think it's better to have forty-year-old actresses reading the sixteen-year-old ingenues, so that they go in and give it their best kick and sometimes offer a very useful sort of objectivity. They are able to tell you things about a sixteen-year-old that sometimes sixteen-year-olds can't. And then you don't have the sceptre hanging over your head of either employing them or never being able to speak to them at a party again. (Storey)

DeFelice adds that suitable actors sometimes use the workshop to audition for the part, and that such performing, rather than trying to serve the play, can block the workshop. However, Van Heyst "hope[s] that they're auditioning, because then the stakes are higher. If this isn't just fifty-six dollars and thirteen cents today, then they're delivering more. They're trying harder." Moher notes that earlier in development he likes to use actors of various ages and types that will give him different perspectives on the characters, but that closer to production he likes to "cast close to type and age," in order to test the play for production.

There is also some debate on performance pressure concerning actors in the workshop who will be performing the role. Haynes and Van Heyst approve of such a situation, as it intensifies the workshop in a positive way: it creates a dialogue or dynamic of true collaboration between the playwright and the actor. The actor has a prolonged experience and extended understanding of the role, adds Haynes. Hinton wants actors who will be performing the roles because it increases their stakes. Mann thinks that commitment is probably slightly higher if the actor is performing the role, but notes that it depends on the triumvirate since they set the tone in the workshop. Finally, DeFelice again cautions against distorting the playwright's vision because of the pressure to perform on the actor.

Another possible task for the actor in the workshop that involves the pressure of performance is a public or staged reading. Flaherty likes staged readings provided the actors have time to prepare and do not have performance pressure forced upon them. "The usefulness of a staged reading is that it becomes less of an intellectual exercise for the actor." (Flaherty) Both Pearson and Mann note that public readings involve performance pressure. Mann adds that such pressure can be both useful and limiting. It can be good for the playwright to see the actors in this situation, but often the best the actor can do is get a sense of the text, and a feeling for and consistency of character. Hinton believes that the bigger stakes for the actor outweigh any negative limiting effects. Actors learn about the play while doing it in front of an audience, Skelton notes. Both Skelton and Selman (22-3) emphasize the importance of discussion after public or staged readings to find out what the actors have learned.

Whatever the actors do during the workshop, the workshop concentrates upon them. As Potter notes: "We're paying a bunch of actors during the workshop. Let's use them."

After the workshop, the actor seldom has any function, unless he or she is involved in a series of workshops leading up to a production. "From an acting point of view I think being involved in a series of workshops leading up to a production and then being involved in the production can be very valuable, because you develop over time a history with that character that, as long as you're open to having your scenes cut or whatever, can be really useful." (Mann) Mann believes this can be invaluable in NPD because of the split focus between dramaturgical and usual work. Over a series of workshops the actor can have enough time available for character work. However, Mann cautions that such a situation is only valuable to the playwright if it is the right actor for the role.

In order to perform his or her role in the workshop, the individual actor has certain needs of and responsibilities to the other players. The actor has little to do with the dramaturg, according to Haynes, Flaherty, and Mann. Haynes notes that the actor needs the dramaturg to stay aside and allow the process with the actors to happen in the workshop. However, another analytical voice can be useful, notes Mann.

As Haynes notes in the "discussion", the actor needs the director to define his or her role. Pearson, Mann, and

Flaherty also agree that the actor needs to be guided by the director. In particular, Mann notes that the actor needs the director to give him or her an idea of the playwright's intent so that the actor can avoid making misleading assumptions that slant the play.

Generally, the actor has more responsibilities to than needs from the playwright. Pearson notes that her relationship in the workshop is usually with the director, and if asked, with the playwright. Haynes and Potter agree that the actor and the playwright knowing each other better helps improve the playwright's time in the workshop. Potter adds that one of the main functions at Workshop West is to foster particular actor/playwright relationships so that the playwright knows what the actor is capable of and so that the playwright writes with that actor in mind. This is one of the primary ways in which, in the workshop, the playwright can be brought back into the theatre as though he or she were working with a specific company.

The designer can also fulfill actors' needs in the workshop, according to Haynes, Mann, and Skelton. Skelton particularly notes the designer's contribution on character through costume suggestions and background. Mann expands this to say that the designer's ideas on costume and set can help the actor picture the theatrical world. As Haynes notes, this helps actors discover where they fit into the play. All three note that the designer can help the actor creatively discover the visual elements and that those images filter through the actor's process. Finally, Mann notes that being involved with design can be rewarding to the actor as it can encourage a sense of ownership. The actor can have input into an area where he usually has none.

Chapter Five: The Designer

> That's a fabulous experience. That's a real gift, to have a designer. I just find it a real charge.
> (Hinton)
>
> Designers are fantastic. Designers are great. I just find their input in workshops to be wonderful.
> (Nelson)
>
> I love, love, love having designers at workshops.
> (Massing)

At least to the playwrights, designers seem to be a popular addition to the workshop process, yet when considering workshops a designer does not come to mind as being one of the key participants. In CTR's NPD issue, Per Brask outlines a typical workshop model whose players are the playwright, dramaturg, director, and actors. (13) Flaherty in her 1992 article on NPD outlines a similar model, while adding how remarkable it is to leave designers out of the process. ("Table Stakes" 28-9) Leonard also gives and decries a model without a designer. (50) Flaherty says that "to leave the input of the designers out of the process of play development reinforces the primacy of the word in a definition of what constitutes text." ("Table Stakes" 30) Perhaps the reason playwrights like designers so much is that the involvement of the designer connects the playwright to theatre beyond the word.

Designers often seem to be an afterthought in NPD.

Skelton corrects his idea of the food chain to say that, "when we're talking about a predominantly spoken language play, designers are probably at the bottom of the food chain." However, perhaps one should view the designer not as an afterthought in the workshop, but as a vital component of the workshop, after thought. After an overview of the large quantity of reading and discussion that I have outlined as occurring in the workshop, one can appreciate the need for the designer to help take the play beyond the words. Using the voices of designers Morris Ertman, David Skelton, and Daniel Van Heyst, as well as the other players, I have created a "discussion" on the visual point of view that the designers provide.

SKELTON: I think, regardless of where you are in the workshop, it's not about setting anything for me as the designer. It's for me to act as a stimulus to the writer.

SELMAN: With an early draft [the designer should be] throwing out images and instinctive visual comments [like] 'the style you seem to be looking for is [such and such], in terms of the way you move from this scene to that scene. [You want the designer] to be able to recognize a fractured style that maybe the playwright's playing with and to say, 'That's possible. Now it's going to mean these things and this is where it would take it.' So a yes, very much a yes to the play and what the play tells you, or just the possibilities.

ERTMAN: As a designer, from the point of view of how the set is going to work and everything like that, there's not much point in it [the designer's viewpoint in the workshop], because the playwright needs to tell the story first. I think that too much attention is paid to style. A good play is a good play because the story works and has clarity. I'm probably reacting to what I see as a tendency at times for a company to bring a designer in, in the hopes that they will affect the play theatrically, the style of it. It's not necessarily about the story, it's more about the theatricality of the story. Often us coming up with some wacky amazing theatrical image that the writer has to live up to is not necessarily the best way to work. It's a really fine line.

SKELTON: Early [in script development], one of the things that I think is important is trying to come up with and be able to say what kind of whole visual approach, what kind of visual style does this thing suggest. Does this suggest pure naturalism or does this suggest an expressionistic kind of look, and frequently you will be at odds with the writer.

ERTMAN: I think it's better [for the designer to come in] later on. You're responding to something in motion. It's not too late for a playwright to incorporate things, or for him to make it [the play] richer. And I think you're not at the point where your style sense, your theatricality, is going to be imposed on someone else's story.

VAN HEYST: I think that style is a really difficult thing to pin down when people are talking about a work in progress....Designers at a workshop can help a great deal in getting everybody rowing in the same direction concerning style.

HEATLEY: A designer creates a visual vocabulary for a workshop. Then we're all talking about the same thing.

VAN HEYST: It's my job to come to the play readings, if that's what they are, and allow that reading to create the imaginary production or film in my head. Then I try to describe some of that to the group [and] to the playwright with language and with a whole lot of other things that excite the whole group about the visual possibilities of this work.

NELSON: Designers are great because they think in a different way. They think visually, conceptually, imagistically. Their response to a play won't be, 'I didn't buy that.' Their response to the play will be, 'I see a film noir black and white movie, grainy. I see lots of blues.' They just give you a whole new way of looking at things....They tend to really glean what is important about the play, and what is most effective about the play, and what works the best, and they build on that.

POTTER: It [the designer's role] ranges from an intuitive idea, an image that the designer might come up with to some practical advice, looking at the play and the way locations are handled in the play, [and] looking at the way scene transitions are handled.

HINTON: They [designers] have the ability to get to the heart of the play.

HAYNES: There are some very good designers in this city who have good dramaturgical skills. They can look at a play and see what the dramatic structure is and how they would articulate it or begin to articulate it. That tells you a lot, because pictures are worth a thousand words and they tend to speak that way.

VAN HEYST: I see that the dramaturg at the workshop is a specialist in the way that I [as a designer] am, or the way in which a musician at the workshop might be....In some ways our jobs are quite remote in spite of the fact that I call my work at the workshop "visual dramaturgy." It's quite fundamentally different in manner and media to what the textual dramaturge is doing.

MOHER: The designer in the workshop helps to resolve the visual structure of the play [and] to understand [the] subconscious connections.

MASSING: I love, love, love having designers at workshops. They provide a whole different vocabulary for what's in the play. It's kind of like having a visual dramaturg. I just find their comments come from a different universe, and I find that very valuable.

VAN HEYST: The way into what-is-theatre [can] be through the non-verbal....I do find that the other thing that tends to happen in workshops, in my experience, is either we tend to address the play as literary critics, or we will tend to address the play as sociologists and psychologists rather than talking about it as theatre.

HEATLEY: I think it also pushes the workshop beyond the words of a play. I think often in English Canadian Drama we have a tendency to say, 'the words that people say are the only thing that's important.' When in fact how they are contextualized and the world in which they are spoken, and the things that aren't spoken, are of equal importance.

Most agree that the designer acts as a "visual dramaturg" providing a point of view on the visual images and structure. Most also agree that the designer can make a positive contribution to the group's understanding of the play. The visual dramaturg creates a visual vocabulary that can help the others individually and as a group. Skelton and Selman disagree with Ertman concerning the timing of designer participation in NPD, particularly input on style. However, probably both Skelton and Selman would agree with the viewpoint behind Ertman's concerns; a designer should help a playwright access theatricality, not impose theatricality onto the playwright's vision.

In order to best serve the playwright and the group, the designer requires some particular skills and attitudes. Storey insists that the primary attitude for the designer should be to treat the workshop as a regular job. Van Heyst wants the designer to do his or her job and not the playwright's job. In addition, both Storey and Selman want the designer to encourage but not block the playwright by saying that any design is possible. However, DeFelice remarks, "Sometimes you find a play that's impossible to design. The playwright is asking for something that even a very perceptive and skillful designer can't deal with." Van Heyst adds that the designer should not block the playwright by being too "precious" or stuck on design ideas. The designer should assume the play will change and grow as a result of the process and should realize some design ideas may shortly become irrelevant. Therefore, according to Van Heyst, the designer should offer ideas to the playwright and be willing to move on. Also Van Heyst cautions the designer to behave him or herself and not distract by cutting up magazines, creating collages or doing other designer work when the group needs silence. In other words, the designer should remember that he or she is in the workshop to serve the play and the playwright.

Especially as the designer will often be involved in production workshops and will eventually design the production, the designer needs to remain open to the needs of the play and the playwright at each particular point in development and not have too strong a personal design agenda. Mann, Potter, Van Heyst, and Skelton all underline the importance of the designer remaining open. On the other hand, Nelson accepts designer agendas provided they are stated, and thinks that workshops close to production can and probably should have design agendas. However, both Skelton and Van Heyst caution against personal design agendas, while Van Heyst remarks that designers can come out of workshops with design ideas or concepts providing that they did not go into the workshop with fixed ideas or looking to solve particular design needs:

> I go into the workshop and I want to be open, because if I come as a designer with my agenda,

> that by the end of this three days or two days or whatever, I want to have a concept, a ground plan, a costume plot, whatever, then I may close off some exploration or not be helpful to the others in the way that the group as a whole needs because I'm trying to solve it. But it's very satisfying when one does, through the workshop process, find an overall scenic concept.

While bringing these attitudes, particularly openness, to the workshop, the designer also needs to bring certain skills. In general he or she brings two types of skills that could be described as visual/design skills and structural skills. Concerning the former, both Mann and Potter emphasize the creativity and intuition of the designer. Potter particularly wants an innovative designer to deal with new situations in new scripts in a fresh way. One of the creative abilities that the designer brings, according to Ertman, Van Heyst, Nelson, Massing, and Hinton, is the ability to think in pictures or images. "They've got this peculiar weird imagistic thing happening in their heads that no one else really has got, and I find that so useful." (Hinton) Skelton notes that listening helps the designer to create because all the others' perceptions, and especially the playwright's intent, filter through and aid the designer's perceptions. The designers all agree that they can then bring images to the workshop both verbally and through non-verbal means.

Van Heyst, Massing, and Potter cite quickness, or an accelerated process, as helping the designer help the group and the playwright, since it allows the designer to bring in non-verbal material in particular. Van Heyst wants quickness in research, presentations, and the construction of practical design tools such as ground plans. For example, if research on a particular area of the play is needed, then the designer should be able to go off and prepare a presentation which includes audio/visual material. If the group wants to stand the play up and do some staging, the designer should be able to do a ground plan in three minutes and quickly offer insights on spatial components and relationships. Flexibility will help the designer accomplish design tasks quickly, according to Skelton and Van Heyst. Mann and Van Heyst agree that it helps if the designer is also able to create visual exercises and bring in visual material quickly, assisting the group in exploring the play without setting any design parameters. At the same time, bringing in potential design and costume ideas is a practical design ability that can help the group and the playwright. However, Ertman warns, and Van Heyst agrees, that the application of practical skills such as creating a set design can help focus the play in the workshop, but can also limit the growth of the play.

In addition, Massing believes that as well as accelerating the process, it helps if designers can articulate a visual point of view on such things as structure and character. The designer can often "just talk about the play from another door." (Selman) Skelton adds that the designer should have more than just design skills and should be able to address issues of character and structure. As Haynes notes, the visual point of view can help the group with the structure of the play: "The designer speaks about the central conflict, usually expressed in a very simple way. It helps in a way to unclutter a workshop and give an added dimension to a workshop." Ertman, as well as Hinton in the "discussion", remark that the designer can get to the structural heart of the play. Ertman explains that his concern with how a play moves helps him with structural concerns in the story:

> There's a visual point of view. We think about how a story moves and is blocked. [If it's a play where] nothing happens, I can't create a space that functions for a story that doesn't exist. [I am] able to say: "What is the set?" My motivation for saying that is there's nothing going on in the play. (Ertman)

Potter notes that because of his or her unique perspective, the designer can ask questions that need to be asked. Like Ertman in the case above, designers can offer criticism from a different angle that the playwright can listen to, that he or she could not hear from others.

Ertman and Van Heyst also agree that the designer can ably fulfill the role of potential audience member because of her external or audience perspective:

> I think that designers by nature think about how a show is packaged for an audience. We come at this thing setting visual parameters. We deal with style. We think about the impact of our designs, how they look, how they feel to an audience. That's our communication. For that very reason I think we're well equipped in the process to represent the audience. (Ertman)

At the same time, Van Heyst acknowledges that as a potential audience member the designer is a visually sophisticated viewer.

Prior to the workshop, the designer begins to apply his or her skills and attitudes to the play at hand. Heatley, Storey, and Skelton want the designer, at least at first, to treat the play like any other and do his or her job. "As a designer on the one hand I would start in the same way as with any play, [but] just in my mind. [On the other hand] often the script is not at the point where images can be considered." (Skelton) Skelton advocates doing a normal designer's job depending on the level of development of the play. Potter and Van Heyst agree that the designer's job before and during the workshop depends upon the stage of the play and the playwright. Potter adds that early in development, the designer can apply his or her structural skills to talk about the story if it is too soon for images. However, Van Heyst notes that by the second draft, plays are often complex enough to need a designer. As noted in the "discussion", Skelton and Ertman disagree about the timing of the designer's entrance to the developmental process and when the designer should prepare to have an impact on the style of the play. As it takes time to explore the play visually, Mann cautions that the workshop should probably be of longer duration, at least two days, if it is to include a significant design component in addition to the usual actor/director component.

When approaching the text as fixed, the designers agree that they should explore images predominantly arising from the script. Skelton likes to extract the visual opportunities and requirements from the script. He also likes to gather and bring in images from other sources tangential to the play. Van Heyst describes his extraction and gathering of images as his "image file." He discovers the play by gathering images, colours, textures, lines, details, and objects that are given weight by the text or potential symbols. He will gather visual images that have some resonance with the play from magazine clippings, research material with illustrations, photographs, and other works of visual art. Although he prefers to gather the image file after hearing the initial reading in the workshop, so that his response can be enriched by hearing the other voices, Van Heyst acknowledges that normally he prepares the file prior to the workshop because of time constraints during the workshop.

Also prior to the workshop, the designer must be careful to keep him or herself open and not establish design agendas, according to Skelton, Van Heyst, and Ertman. Skelton notes that the designer should have some ideas about the set, but not go into the workshop with those ideas fixed.

While the designers agree that they should not have a personal design agenda prior to the workshop, Van Heyst and Skelton agree that the overall workshop should have an agenda. Potter, Skelton, and Van Heyst add that the designer can take part in the planning sessions with the triumvirate, making a "quadrumvirate". However, usually the designer confers only with the director prior to the workshop, if anyone at all. Both Skelton and Van Heyst like to get the goals and agenda from the director before going in or at least at the beginning of the workshop. If not, Skelton notes that the designer should try to pick up the goals from the triumvirate, particularly the director, during the workshop.

During the workshop, the designer should apply his or her attitudes and skills. Attitudes such as openness, willingness to serve the play and the playwright and focus on her own job, as with any play, should be applied by the designer. Storey adds that designers, like the director and actors, should focus on what they need to know to produce this play. As Nelson remarks, the designer should speak at the table about the design he would create if he were involved in a production of the play. According to Skelton however, the designer can best serve the play and the playwright by responding to the playwright's intent and not just the script "as is".

Intuitive, practical, and structural skills that should be used by the designer during the workshop include listening to others, articulating his or her process, being flexible, being creative, bringing images, being able to do practical design work, bringing a visual point of view, especially on the areas of character and structure, and being able to represent the audience in the workshop. In addition, the designer should be able to accelerate these skills and processes. Many agree that images the designer shows to the group can be valuable. Van Heyst comments that he likes to share his image file with the group as soon as possible because images are a non-verbal way into the play. Sometimes he shows his file, without comment, on a bulletin board or as a collage. Other times, he will explain his choice of images and materials. In each case, he looks for the reaction of the group members to see which images that arise from the play communicate something to a majority of the participants: "We have to choose signs in the theatre that reach most of the people most of the time." (Van Heyst) These signs or images can be visual, sensual, or metaphorical, notes Selman. She adds that such images together with practical design work, like potential set models or sketches, can feed, both practically and intuitively, the visual potential in the work.

During the workshop the designer is often called upon to do practical design work. DeFelice wants the designer to take a crack at a possible design. Both DeFelice and Selman suggest the designer prepare models or mockups of potential sets. Heatley, Van Heyst, and DeFelice look for visual renderings of set, costume, or concept. Heatley and Van Heyst add that this could include ground plans. More generally, Mann adds that the designer should bring in or discuss potential set or costume designs.

Practical work can be especially important if staging is to be a part of the workshop. Skelton notes that if a scene or scenes are to be staged, he tries to bring in props and/or clothes, particularly if the play revolves around certain articles. Both he and Van Heyst will create ground plans and construct spatial relationships. The designer should create a space and suggest the position of the actor in that space, according to Skelton. Haynes notes that the designer can clarify character relationships by clarifying their spatial relationships. However, Skelton adds that the play should be in the later stages of development for such specific design input. Heatley thinks that if one of the goals is to see how and if the play can be staged, the designer should come up with a design and staging in order to affirm to the playwright that the play can be done.

Selman, in the "discussion", as well as Heatley and Storey, stress the importance of saying yes to the playwright and both to give the playwright confidence and to free the playwright's imagination. For example, Selman remarks that practical work, such as early mockups, can show that a play is not a stylistic nightmare. Storey more forcefully adds that the designer should affirm that the play is possible, that even more is possible, and that the visual elements are probably the most exciting part of the play. Hinton also wants the designer's input on whether the play is workable. In addition, she wants the designer to offer her several different approaches and open up the potential design options. According to Hinton, this can be especially important for playwrights who are not visually gifted. Skelton adds that the designer often needs to train the writer to think visually for the theatre. He will tell a writer that it will work but it will work in particular ways. For instance, if a spaceship blows up in the play, the designer can create a version of that on stage. In addition, Heatley and DeFelice note that sometimes the playwright, particularly if he or she is a non-theatre person, needs to find out from the designer if the play is achievable within the limits of theatre.

Van Heyst always assumes that the play will be produced by the company producing the workshop. He will propose a set and concept using the normal materials, skills, and space available to the company. Although he does not want to be limited by budget, Van Heyst will not conceive of a design that the company could not possibly afford. Van Heyst wants to bring the text as close as possible to the experience that the group in general and the playwright in particular want the audience to have. As a part of this process, the playwright will certainly see if the play is workable on stage.

However, Ertman believes that the designer's input on whether the play is workable is of little use since the director should be able to comment on stageability in most cases. He also remarks that he does not want to assume a particular space because he does not want to limit the play, hoping it will be produced in many different kinds of spaces. On the other hand, Van Heyst does not want to create a particular normal design that will limit the playwright, but wants to create a group design sparked by the play, the playwright, the images gathered in the file, and the group work. This design will give the playwright a possible design for the play at that moment as seen by that group, a non-restrictive design which the playwright can take away, but not a final or limiting design. DeFelice adds that as the designer is most often used for production workshops, or at least workshops with particular design agendas, the triumvirate and especially the playwright will most often want to see a potential design.

In addition, many agree that the designer will often be used for plays in which design is a major element. Flaherty thinks that the dramaturg has trouble with this type of play and needs a designer's input. Van Heyst notes that more and more plays contain non-realistic conventions and that the designer can help figure out the implications of such conventions. He lists as examples the use of devices such as mask, puppetry, and double or triple or cross-gender casting. Mann adds that the designer can help with such conventions as playing non-human "characters" or working with set or costume material to make a costume out of a roll of cloth, for example. Mann suggests that the designer help the playwright to see if the purely visual material works or not. In order to do this with visual plays, both Skelton and Van Heyst think that the designer should come in to the development process earlier. However, Van Heyst notes that the designer can also surprise and help a playwright with a naturalistic play. Skelton adds that with naturalistic plays, the designer usually acts as an additional dramaturg with a visual point of view.

The designer offers this visual point of view to the group by taking part in discussion, making presentations, or leading exercises. As noted by Heatley and Van Heyst during the "discussion", and by Massing, Selman, and the actors, the designer can help the group members by giving them a common vocabulary for certain aspects of the play such as the visual style, the location, and the atmosphere. Van Heyst remarks that the designer can provide this common vocabulary by showing material to the group or by asking questions, but it is easier to talk about style, location, and atmosphere by means of images. He prefers to offer all his input to the whole group rather than to the playwright in private, since it is useful to the group and because the group's feedback is useful to both the designer and the playwright. Pearson, Haynes and Selman note in particular that the designer's input can help make the play's world and atmosphere clearer. Pearson adds that the designer helps the group with the mood of the play and the feel of the space. Both Haynes and Pearson agree that the designer's talk about the world of the play can help them see the structure and flow of the story. Haynes thinks that the designer's articulation of the "ball park" grounds the others in the world of the play, and gives them the scope of the play. The designer's input, especially on the world of the play, gives the actors a reality underneath the reading and the group a reality underneath the discussion. According to Mann, the designer's help in developing this group consciousness may be of more use than the designer's practical work. Finally, both Haynes and Selman agree that the designer's input helps keeps everyone's imagination open.

The designer offers the above comments and materials to the group primarily during discussion. Mann remarks that in a general discussion the designer speaks about the ideas, feel, and atmosphere of the play. In the "discussion" at the beginning of this chapter, Potter indicated that the designer's input in discussion ranged from intuitive through practical to structural. Skelton notes that the designer often has ideas that are "out there," which he will offer to the group during discussion or to the playwright later. He adds that no matter what the idea, he does not want to censor himself. Further ideas which are sparked by the workshop are often more important than ideas gleaned from solitary work prior to the workshop, according to Skelton. Skelton also feels that the designer should participate in discussion even if his or her particular skills are not called upon. However, he cautions that if the designer is uncertain and has nothing to say at a particular moment in the workshop, he or she should not speak unless the director addresses design issues.

One of the ways the designer can respond outside of specific design issues is to address issues of character and structure. Hinton, Nelson, Potter, and Haynes in the "discussion", as well as the designers, all note the designer's input on structure. Skelton observes, for example, that the designer needs to understand transitions, especially between scenes, in order to do his or her own job. This allows the designer to speak in the normally directorial or dramaturgical territory of structure. Hinton adds that the designer can often be the most blunt or honest about the "heart of the play." Ertman believes that the designer, from a slightly exterior position, can be the one who says what needs to be said, as in his earlier example of the designer being able to speak about the lack of movement at the heart of a play by talking about the set.

Skelton, Van Heyst, Haynes, Mann, and Selman also note that the designer can address character in the workshop. Skelton and Van Heyst usually speak about character through costume, but will also offer other insights on character. Ertman adds that as a set and lighting designer and not a costume designer he will often be silent during discussion since discussion so often focuses on character.

Van Heyst's comments on character and structure, as well as other aspects of the play during the workshop, often come from the designer playing a role Van Heyst terms the "visual dramaturg." This is one possible way for the designer to work that Van Heyst has developed and articulated. According to Van Heyst, activities of the visual dramaturg include pointing out visual motifs, making observations about setting or the world of the play, and focusing on costume and character.

Concerning motifs, Van Heyst likes to point them out and say to the others, and especially to the playwright, "This is the motif I see. This is why I think it's important. This is what I think it means to the audience and so on. Do you agree with me? If so, how might the production develop that so that it supports the story in an appropriate way but doesn't swamp it?" Moher, in the "discussion", stresses the designer's ability to extract such possibly subconscious connections. As an example, Moher notes that during workshops of The Third Ascent, Van Heyst as the designer, was able to point out the similarities between Native Thunderbird images and atom bomb images. Once aware of the connection, Moher made this link more explicit in subsequent drafts of the play.

As others indicated previously, they find the designer's contributions on setting or the world of the play very valuable. As visual dramaturg, Van Heyst investigates this: "If the play is set in some part or parts that bear resemblance to the world as we know it then...what is it about those real places that appeal to the playwright? What aspects of that real place are relevant to this story? [You want] to discover what the sensual qualities are of the place that's being referred to, that do support this story." (Van Heyst)

Having examined motifs and setting, Van Heyst then often does costume plots in order to find out about the structure of the play, the status of the characters, the relationships among the characters, and the theatrical costuming conventions required. Structurally, a costume plot will tell him where large scenes and small scenes are in relation to each other by looking at the number of characters in each scene. It will also tell him which characters are important and which unimportant. Looking at which scenes and the number of scenes in which characters are involved tells him who is in the foreground and who is in the background. In addition, the costume plot will suggest what costuming conventions may be required. For example, if an actor does not leave the stage but has many costume changes, the play requires either an amalgam costume that can suggest all the different costumes or a way for the actor to change on stage that looks like it is meant to be seen by the audience. Will the other actors/characters help with the changes? Is there a need to find a moment for the actor to exit to allow quick changes? As Van Heyst notes:

> Just doing a preliminary costume plot gets a lot of really valuable discussion going on about how does clothing help to communicate this story? It suggests to you some workable strategies for the text. And it may also point out some particular difficulties to the playwright, who'll go, 'Oh. I could easily delay that entrance, that wouldn't be a problem.' And then suddenly a whole different costuming convention is possible. A sort of technical visual dramaturgy may raise those questions and allow the playwright to respond with helpful answers and open up possibilities instead of closing them off.

As recorded earlier, Van Heyst believes the designer can be especially valuable when exploring non-realistic techniques. One way he can be useful is to examine practical ramifications of particular theatrical conventions. Such a technical visual dramaturgy can, through the practical, address deeper aesthetic issues of the play.

Finally, more generally, Skelton, Van Heyst, Heatley, Selman, and Mann note how the designer leads the group in visual discovery of the play through non-verbal presentations such as collages and, in Van Heyst's particular case, by leading the group in doing visual exercises. Massing enjoys the fresh perspective of the play offered by these exercises. According to Massing, they force people to discover the play anew, and this highlights moments and emotional peaks, anything that people would notice the first time they come into contact with the play.

These exercises change depending on the nature and stage of the play. However, as an example, Van Heyst cites an exercise used in the development of the Frank Moher play, Blue Trumpeter. He gave each person in the workshop a pile of magazines and a pair of scissors, and asked them to cut out images suitable for, or representative in some way of, any of the eight characters. The participants then put these images into eight large character displays on different tables for viewing. Further, he asked people to remove images they felt did not belong as a way to reduce the displays to images that communicated the essence of or aspects of the characters to most people. Van Heyst notes that this is a good way of discussing character non-verbally as each person articulated the characters for him or herself and the other participants purely through images. Massing also notes how useful it can be for the playwright when people pick the same images intuitively. However, Moher cautions that in this particular example, most of the participants took out images he had chosen. The playwright must be careful to hold on to his or her own sense of the images in the play given all that input.

Van Heyst also gives individual exercises to help the playwright develop his or her own visual sense of the play. Using another example from the development of Blue Trumpeter, Van Heyst had Moher draw a "heartbeat line" of the play early in development. Moher drew a line that was to get thicker or thinner and go up or down according to the intensity of the moments in the play. In addition, using paints, markers, magazine clippings and other visual materials, Moher was to add images at any point on the line he chose. As part of this exercise Moher put two drops of paint near the beginning of the line. Moher notes that: "the long line exercise [suggested] intuitively two drops of paint on canvas and this became the opening sequence of all characters on stage -- all elements, paints, on stage. This had a domino effect in [the] play. It broadened the stylistic range." This is one specific example of the designer helping the writer during the workshop make image become text.

The designer is not usually involved post-workshop. However, Skelton notes that it is useful to have the same designer involved in a series of workshops leading up to production. As with actors, this fosters a richer understanding, greater trust, and a shorthand communication.

Skelton adds that ideas that he is not able to communicate during the workshop can be communicated to the playwright afterwards. However, he usually tries to give these ideas at the end of each day during the workshop or at breaks. In order not to overload or pressure the playwright, Skelton believes these ideas should be deliverable briefly -- no more than forty seconds -- and should be offered for the playwright to take or leave.

The designer has needs of the other participants and particularly the playwright. Skelton notes that sometimes plays or playwrights do not need designers, so the designer needs a playwright who both needs and wants a designer. Ertman wants a playwright who can handle the pressure of the designer's input and who will not allow a style to be imposed upon his or her play. For this reason, both Skelton and Ertman think it is not useful when the playwright clings to or is in awe of the designer and latches onto all that the designer says. Van Heyst adds that he wants a playwright who is open to collaboration as he wants to share his ideas with the group. He believes the group feedback to his images and other input can be valuable to both designer and playwright.

However, as Van Heyst and Skelton note, while the designer has more fundamental needs of the playwright, his or her primary relationship is with the director. Skelton adds that the designer has some good time with the playwright but more time with the director. The director most often communicates the goals of the workshop to the designer. Perhaps it is even more helpful when the director includes the designer as part of the team deciding those goals. During the workshop, according to Van Heyst, the designer makes his offerings under the cue of the chairperson, usually the director. He wants a director who does not establish design parameters, as a director would normally do. Van Heyst wants the director to allow the imaginary group vision of a production to emerge.

The designer has few specific needs of the actor that he does not have of the entire group. Skelton wants the actors to be willing to accept the designer's input on character. Both he and Van Heyst remark that good readers who embody the characters and get the flow of the play can help spark the designer to have a rich response to the play. Van Heyst wants to use the actors and the rest of the participants as a potential audience to test if images are apt. He also wants everyone's work to help spark the imaginary group production of the play.

Skelton notes that the designer often has little contact with the dramaturg but that dramaturgical opinions can be useful to the designer. Especially, he notes, knowing more about structure helps to put images in context. Van Heyst adds that the dramaturg has an acuity the designer usually does not have, and the dramaturg will notice things about the play the designer does not. In particular, Van Heyst believes that dramaturgs who have a good sense of genre can help the designer, since genre can be a clue to style. The dramaturg should share this information with the group, not privately with the playwright, so neither the designer nor actors miss valuable information. "I'm not interested in playing with people who are only interested in sitting on the sidelines. I want them [dramaturgs] to be in the game." (Van Heyst)

When discussing the designer in the workshop I have been assuming the use of visual designers -- set, costume, and lighting designers -- but other associate artists such as sound designers or choreographers could also "get in the game." Potter has tried using both choreographers and sound designers, particularly during the 1985 playmaking Ensemble, depending on the play and the goal of the workshop. DeFelice notes that the associate artists can be useful, depending on the play, but that visual designers are normally the most useful. Heatley agrees that he does not use "aural dramaturgs" as consistently as visual dramaturgs and he has not yet used a choreographer. In any case, the inclusion of visual, aural, or movement designers brings the story closer to the theatrical and to a blueprint for performance. The workshop, with the designer, is more open-ended.

Conclusion

> Choosing a workshop to develop a play is like choosing a suit off the rack. It will never be as good as tailor-made, the standard sizes never actually fit a real person, but it's cheaper and with some alterations it fits well enough for most occasions. Keep searching for the perfect fit, and be aware that someone else set the original size. Maybe you want to shop elsewhere. (Kerr)

Most participants would agree that the workshop is a tool meant to assist the NPD process; however, they would argue about how to apply it. In order to make this a productive or useful argument, the players within the process should be aware of the standard workshop structure. They need a common territory and language for discussion. Knowing a "standard size" allows the participants to choose it "as is," with alterations, or not at all.

In this thesis I have examined in detail and outlined the standard workshop structure -- or size -- by focusing on the individual participant roles. In the conclusion, I will now summarize this workshop model and the general roles of the participants as group members.

Prior to the workshop, the most important activity is the specific planning, usually done by the director, dramaturg, and playwright, depending on the producing company's organizational structure. Flaherty emphasizes negotiating with the producing company to alter organizational structures for the good of the play. Selman adds that "theatre companies must take more responsibility for building an ongoing consultation between the playwright and director that begins before the workshop and continues after." (19) The producing company should provide the director and playwright, and dramaturg if there is one, with time for pre-planning. According to Potter, the workshopping organization, along with the triumvirate, must make sure at the very beginning of planning that they examine their own assumptions about what the workshop will be, and in particular Potter's four assumptions. Also at this point, the organization and the triumvirate should decide whether the workshop is primarily to develop the play or the playwright, using a production or a non-production workshop.

Having examined these assumptions and with ample time for planning, the triumvirate can begin to make specific plans for the goals and structure of the workshop. Potter notes that individual workshops have more differences than individual rehearsals, and that workshops can have many structures. He wants the workshop customized for each play and for each playwright. Hinton emphasizes using typical workshop structures provided they can be changed and customized for the particular workshop -- she wants no restrictive rules. She does not even want to set rules to exclude parts of the traditional structure that she does not like, such as public readings: "I don't want to set rules on that one either, because I may write a play tomorrow and suddenly think, 'I've really got to have a public reading.'" (Hinton) Mann adds that he wants specific yet open structures or rules within each individual workshop.

Jan Selman (19) and Elliott Hayes (36) both warn planners to watch the tendency to "talk" rather than "do" in the workshop:

> I wish I could offer some great insight into the best balance between talking about the play versus playing it. I can't because I quickly come up against the varying needs of each play and each playwright. My sense is that there is a tendency during workshops to go overboard on talk, and thereby undervalue the reading and playing stage: the playwright -- and all the workshop participants for that matter -- will learn new things about the play by working it. (Selman 19)

Potter also prefers that the workshop to focus on the practical reading and playing, and steers the workshop away from too much discussion.

The triumvirate must decide if it will share the goals and structure of the workshop with the other participants, particularly the actors. The triumvirate should consider that the actors would prefer to know both the goals and the structure in order to fulfill successfully their roles.

Flaherty warns against a nightmare of usually well-intentioned but useless input if the participants do not know their specific roles in the workshop. For example, the playwright needs to decide whether he or she will be primarily active or passive or both during the workshop. If the workshop includes both director and dramaturg then they must delineate their separate responsibilities. If one person functions as both, then he or she should decide on the extent of his or her dramaturgical or directorial duties before, during, and after the workshop. The triumvirate needs to decide about the "two schools of thought" and then guide the actors to do "as is" or "enhanced" performances. The actors also need to know if they will be asked, as "specialists," to comment on as well as to create their characters. Finally, the triumvirate must decide if the designer should join them in making a planning "quadrumvirate," and if the designer will primarily do practical work or lead the group in a visual exploration.

In order to fulfill their roles during the workshop, all the players need general skills and attitudes in addition to the array of skills and attitudes particular to each participant. Primary among these is an appropriate attitude towards doing new work. Many players spoke strongly about the necessary attitude:

SELMAN: [Everyone needs] an attitude to new work, [including] enjoying being on a new journey, willing to be open, willing to be blunt, to be honest, always from a point of view of the positive, the possibilities -- honest though.

POTTER: [You need] a kind of a courage level that not every [theatre artist] has -- the new play process feels riskier, it is riskier. Actors and designers tend to be used to dealing with classics or hits from somewhere else. They're used to a highly developed level of script. Then you come in with the new play by the local writer who shows promise, but you don't necessarily expect them to deliver a huge artistic or commercial hit first time out. That can be confusing and frightening for some of the other artists in the process who don't know how to deal with that situation.

NELSON: What happens is that it often turns into [a] writing-by-committee-play-fixing session, because often what is presented as the idea of a workshop is that 'Here we are. We're going to help this play get better.' And so all these actors come into the workshop saying, 'I'm going to help this playwright.' Which is great except that all of the focus is then put on the script, and all of the problems that come [up] in the workshop, the assumption is made that it's a problem in the script. That happens in workshops. That's just the nature of the beast.

SKELTON: You really need to understand that [the play is] new and that it's fragile. If there are parts that aren't working yet, [you need] to understand that that is part of the process.

HEATLEY: Keep the playwright open, because if they're not open they're not going to do anything. They can't. If all the playwright's doing is defending their play as it stands during the workshop, then it has no chance to move in their mind or in their heart or anywhere. If they're opened and feel like they're being respected, and that their work is being respected, I think that then they'll have the opportunity to hear what others are saying, to see what others are doing. That's really the most important thing.

POTTER: You always want to reach high, but it's a slightly different process and it requires courage and sensitivity both.

MASSING: A kind of generosity of spirit is very important from everybody.

HEATLEY: I look for someone in general who loves the process, somebody who is really turned on by the challenge of approaching something that's unfinished.

FLAHERTY: So it's impossible. So what? Find a way.

PEARSON: The whole point of new plays and new play development in this country is to help us to build a body of Canadian work, good Canadian work. And you never know. You have to be prepared for it to fail, and not worry about that. We just have to try it. The joy of new work is that there's always that chance that it might be the best new play of the season. You may discover a new person, or a new talent that is going to take the country by storm. You never know. Every time you pick up a new play there's that potential. It's bigger than the individuals.

POTTER: I say to actors, 'The character may be underdeveloped, the play may be underdeveloped, but you've got a chance to be in on the initial creative process'...and maybe [to] help the theatre community and audience to appreciate the value of doing new work.

The players should approach each new work with enthusiasm, respect, and honesty, while understanding the fragility of the play. At the same time, as Nelson warns, they should focus on doing their own jobs rather than trying to fix the play for the playwright. Further, Potter and Flaherty underline that the players must take risks and be willing to work in new ways in order to find new solutions to unique challenges. Finally, the players should alter their expectations of success to focus on the potential reward of getting in on the creative ground floor.

In addition, the players need other general attitudes that help them to function as members of the workshop team, including the willingness to collaborate with mutual respect. Ertman, Massing, Heatley, Skelton, and Van Heyst all stress that the players must, as in any committee situation, "be collaborators, willing to serve the work and willing to serve the group. I guess basically I'm not looking for a star." (Heatley) Returning to Skelton's food chain: "Everybody has a job of importance. Everyone's feeding off everyone else to do their job, and everyone's got to be sensitive to everyone else." Heatley, Grieve, Potter and Haynes emphasize a mutual respect or professional attitude among all the participants and particularly between the playwright and the others that assists everyone to do their job and collaborate. At the same time, Heatley cautions against a too-heightened respect which may prevent the players from doing their jobs:

> It's based on mutual respect but [it's also] based on the fact that theatre is a process and we all have a lot of work to do within it. I'm much happier if we're expending our energy on making theatre happen, rather than making ourselves feel that we're okay. (Heatley)

During discussion in particular, the participants need to support the collaboration by respecting the chair, by not monopolizing discussion, and by being open enough to experience the work and to share experiences. Van Heyst notes the need to facilitate productive discussion: "Usually I will respect the authority of the director as the chairperson of the event. I think some fail at that by monopolizing discussion, by taking up time to discuss their own political agendas." Skelton agrees the players should not monopolize discussion, but thinks that in avoiding this the players should not censor genuine reactions and ideas:

> If the play is suggesting -- if somehow what the workshop is doing is suggesting something to you -- I always try and tell myself, regardless of how wild the idea might be, that you should put it out there, because really that's what the workshop is for. A play is the thing that is suggesting potential, and all that potential should be looked at, at least, and filtered through. (Skelton)

General skills applied during the workshop also assist the discussion, particularly the players' ability to select or edit what they will say and the ability to articulate their processes. Heatley, DeFelice, and Skelton all stress having the tact or personal skills to know when to say what, as well as the ability to select and say only the best ideas in the limited time: "If I have ten ideas, but I really only have time to put in three or five, then [I] put those in and let everybody else put in their three, because it's really more important that the writer hear everybody else's best three than to hear all of my ten." (Skelton) Skelton also emphasizes that the player should not speak when he or she has nothing in particular to say without "making that 'oh, this play doesn't move me in the least.'" Also, Skelton and Massing in particular underline that the ability to articulate their processes better enables all players in the workshop to help the play and the playwright. "That's an ideal sort of thing. Not every designer or actor can articulate their process. In a way it's a kind of detective work." (Massing)

Another ideal quality, according to Massing, Hinton, and Heatley, is the ability of the players to do their own jobs well in getting to know the play, while also acting as audience members. As an example, Heatley likes to use a technique he calls "lobby talk." He wants everyone to focus on their job during the reading, which he will stop after the first act. At this point he will ask everyone: What will bring them back, or has piqued their interest? What has the play set them up to expect? However, concerns by some players about doing their own jobs well and acting as audience members at the same time, suggest that actors in particular have trouble doing both, since actors must often be working too internally to offer a useful external perspective.

Selman also cites focus as a necessary skill for all participants, provided they have time to do their jobs:

> Writers need time to focus on what the play needs, they should not feel pushed to "sell" the piece to the workshop team. Director/dramaturgs need the opportunity to focus in depth upon the playwright's needs and working methods....Actors need an opportunity to focus on revealing the play to the playwright, to show the writer his or her play. (Selman 21)

Designers also need time to focus on doing practical work as well as time to focus in-depth on leading a visual exploration of the play. As Skelton puts it, "Everybody talks about the same things but focus on one more than another."

Skelton and Hinton summarize the skills necessary for all the players. "I think it overlaps for everybody. They all have to focus. They all have to understand the goals. Going back to the fight about self-censorship, you [all] have to ride the line of letting some things out." (Skelton) "In most cases you want people who are open and cooperative, and interested in the collaboration that theatre is about. You also want some really good sharp minds as well, and experience is great." (Hinton) Skills also overlap between roles as, for example, designers can have input on character and actors input on structure. Ideally, most players should have a balance of instinct and intellect.

According to Grieve and Massing, most participants in Edmonton have brought their skills to the workshop and worked hard. Massing in particular cites the best or "ideal" situations where everyone has approached the material with enthusiasm and done his or her job well using instinctive skills while simultaneously monitoring his or her job using intellectual skills:

> Ninety-nine point nine [percent] of the [workshops] I've been involved with, people have

> been really clear and generous with their comments and [with] trying to help make the story clear by doing their job....Some of the best situations I've been involved in, everybody has jumped in, taken big risks with playing the character, and really entered into the story with a kind of enthusiasm at the same time as they're monitoring it all very carefully so that they can reflect back to you what information isn't there. (Massing)

If workshops are generally so useful and well-ordered, and the participants so generous and skilled, then why are there so many complaints about the workshop as a development tool? Perhaps it is because the participants realize that they can make more workshops closer to Massing's "best situations," and because destroying/losing even one play by a faulty application of a workshop is one play too many.

However, the skills and attitudes outlined above, as well as the particular abilities outlined in the preceding chapters, describe the attributes of an ideal or artificial player gleaned from composite descriptions rather than a real participant. As Nelson said about describing the skills and attitudes required by the playwright: "This is ridiculous. This is like the perfect playwright." Probably most good workshop participants have a large number but not all of these attributes to apply during the workshop.

Disagreement remains among the participants about the value of a public reading to end the workshop. Almost all insist that if there is a public reading the play should be ready and the players should have time to prepare. Potter does not generally like public readings, since he finds the pressure to perform distracts the focus from the play and the playwright. He sees them as "more useful for public education than they are for the playwright [as they] bring the audience into the process [and] get them excited with the new play process." (Potter) Although she likes having public readings, Flaherty cautions against using them for very visual plays. What most participants like about public readings is the experience of the actors reading in front of an audience and the audience's response during the reading. Few value highly the audience response following a reading, but Selman and Flaherty believe that it can be usefully harnessed. Finally, Skelton, Selman, and Nelson stress that the workshop not end on a reading, and that the players should debrief together to share what they have learned.

Debriefing is the major activity after the workshop. The playwright, director, and dramaturg should get together as a group, or in pairs, immediately following, or after a lapse, to assimilate the information from the workshop. During this debriefing the triumvirate should share their views and sort out the useful from the not-so-useful input. They may discuss directions for the play's future development in general or in specific terms, including plans for a future workshop or production. Finally, the director and dramaturg should leave the playwright to make any final decisions, and to use or disregard the input from the workshop in rewriting the play.

Reviewing the standard structure and the standard roles brings up some of the questions raised and disputed by the participants and my thoughts on possible answers or "ground rules." For example, should there be a separate director and dramaturg or should one person function as both? Although monetary considerations often dictate having one person play both roles, the large amount of work and their differing foci, especially during the workshop, suggests that having two people playing the roles probably works best, provided they do their jobs effectively. However, the decision about whether to have one or two people should be made with respect to and in consultation with the playwright. Does he or she want or need both, one, or neither?

Having both also helps to mitigate the hierarchical power of the director, often the artistic director, within the workshop and theatre structure. Although this may separate the playwright from the director somewhat, any reduction in the director's normal hierarchical power probably outweighs the loss of contact. The playwright needs to have enough power in the process to have authority over the play. The director, on Benedetti's spectrum, should be a conservative director who subordinates but does not discard his or her vision to the playwright's vision. This is particularly important in many cases where organizational structures dictate having a workshop, whether the playwright wants it or not. Especially in such cases, the director needs to share as much power as possible. Playwrights who nonetheless do not want or need workshops have to negotiate with organizations, find and stay with a particular company or companies that will accommodate their wishes, or find or create another venue by forming companies to produce their plays in alternative spaces or at the Fringe. In Edmonton, playwrights have been able to use all three options.

Other questions raised about the role of the dramaturg include defining or not defining the role and using academically trained dramaturgs or people with theatre backgrounds. Urjo Kareda makes a useful point about lack of definition, allowing the dramaturg to play whatever role necessary as a "rover". However, lack of definition of the dramaturg's function, as with the lack of definition of the workshop structure, has allowed for many abuses, since no one has a solid foundation to question what the dramaturg is doing. Perhaps it would be ideal to combine the two conceptions, and to define the dramaturg's role broadly rather than narrowly. At least, if not generally defined, the dramaturg's role should be defined and understood by all in each particular workshop.

As for an academic or theatre background, clearly dramaturgs need some background in or with the theatre, since most players cite that one of the dramaturg's most essential skills in the workshop, distinguishing performance from text, depends on "knowing how theatre works." However, academic training can assist the dramaturg with a knowledge of such things as structure and genre, and with an increased analytic ability. In order to function effectively, however, a dramaturg with academic training needs to bridge the gap between him or herself and the other participants by showing respect for the process of theatre creation and by showing the ability to do his or her job effectively.

Other difficulties for the dramaturg and others in the process centre around the possibility of self-awareness. For example, dramaturgs and others should be able to reveal their biases and agendas and be objective, but they can only do so to the extent that they are aware of their biases, agendas, and own subjective position. Perhaps my statement supporting academically trained dramaturgs springs from a bias favouring my own academic training, just as practitioners like Potter have a bias toward dramaturgs with a theatre background.

In addition, much of the work of the triumvirate, especially prior to the workshop, focuses on probing the playwright for his or her intent for the play. Many would suggest the playwright's intent is contained within the words of the text. However, the need to protect the play from well-intentioned but misleading advice or performance during the workshop dictates the need to find at least the general direction of the playwright's intent. As Nelson says, during development, some of the playwright's intent is on paper, and some remains as part of the "mythical end product" in the playwright's head, so probing both the play and the playwright for intent is essential.

Probing for intent is closely related to the question of setting goals for the workshop. All workshops should probably have goals even though they may be vague. Setting more specific goals will result in a more productive workshop. However, Moher notes that these goals need not be intellectual: goals can be set to allow the playwright to test the work instinctively. Once the triumvirate has set goals, preferably guided by the playwright, it must decide if it will share them with the rest of the team. The other members definitely prefer knowing the goals and what is expected of them. The triumvirate should overtly share the goals unless it has specific reasons not to, such as not wanting the actors to have preconceptions.

Similarly, Massing prefers that the actors have no preconceptions before a cold reading so she can hear/see the actors' immediate response to the material. However, in most cases, reading the play at least once alone before this cold reading will allow the actors to give better but still fresh readings and enable them to comment more effectively afterwards.

Should the triumvirate guide the actors to do "as is" or "enhanced" performances? This is a particularly difficult question and the answer may lie in a consideration of the actors' abilities and the needs of the play. Ideally, the actors will have a combination of intellect and instinct that enables them to cover gaps while still monitoring and reporting this covering. If the playwright needs to see the entire structure more clearly, then an all-out effort by the actors will help. On the other hand, if the playwright needs to find out what particular moments or transitions work, then it is better for the actor to expose rather than cover weak moments or transitions. As a corollary of this decision, should the actors treat the text as sacrosanct or not? If covering, then the actors should treat the text as fixed and just do their job. If, as Moher suggests in cases where time is limited, they treat the text as changeable, the actors can exercise more judgment about perceived gaps. However, in most cases, it seems the benefits of treating the text as sacrosanct, respecting the text and trying to make it work, outweighs the benefits of treating the text as changeable and judging it, because of the danger of pre-judgement and lack of respect.

Another question concerning the actor is whether performance pressure, caused by such things as the actor auditioning for the part, helps the workshop by giving the actor larger stakes or hinders the workshop by making the actors distort characters and plays in order to make themselves look good? This question relates to two other questions: Should the workshop be a production or non-production workshop? Should it primarily develop the play or the playwright? If the workshop is geared to production, then giving participants greater stakes will probably benefit the production, since they will have an incentive to collaborate to make the production, and therefore the play, as successful as possible. Knowing they will be in the eventual production would be preferable to the actors' auditioning for the production, since it would give them higher stakes without giving them the incentive to distort the play to show themselves in a better light. However, provided the director "sets the tone," the actor can also commit to a non-production workshop. In a non-production workshop, it can be easier to develop the playwright since the lack of competing personal agendas may enable the director and actors, and others, to do their job without distorting the playwright's vision. The workshop can then focus more purely on the playwright's needs.

In all workshops, as Mann suggests, the participants need to be careful of the level of nurturing the playwright. He compares the workshops in Edmonton to workshops he has done in Eastern Canada:

> I did a couple [of workshops] down east and the idea was that you threw the playwright into a roomful of tigers and if they came out with even a shred left, that was good. You tore the play apart, basically tried to see what you could find wrong with it. If you [the playwright] could survive that and go on and improve the play that would make you a better playwright -- basically the school of spare the rod and spoil the child, not at all a nurturing approach. (Mann)

While Mann does not advocate this approach he suggests that for the good of the play and the playwright, the participants should sometimes bring out the rod. He notes that workshops in Edmonton, particularly productions workshops, have sometimes been so nurturing of the playwright that no one asks the playwright tough but necessary dramaturgical questions.

Should the playwright be the centre of a workshop process creating a text or should they be viewed as one collaborator working on the development of a theatrical presentation? Given the new play workshop's mandate to develop plays and playwrights, the playwright should be at the centre of this developmental process. Other theatre development processes can stress a more balanced contribution. In any case, the playwright should embrace collaboration and be more fully involved in the act of theatrical rather than script creation. If the playwright has no desire to collaborate, the workshop will be useless. One general purpose of the workshop is to bring the playwright closer to the collaboration of creating theatre.

Working in collaboration with the others while retaining ultimate authority will help the playwright create a blueprint for a theatre event rather than a literary script while still maintaining his or her cogent single vision. The decision to include designers aids the playwright in creating this blueprint, since their vision will remind the playwright and the group that theatrical text is more than just words. However, the designer's input must be tempered by the playwright retaining authority. Input on such elements as style should not overwhelm the story of the play. In order to help the playwright and the workshop, it would seem appropriate to include the designer in pre-planning sessions, creating a "quadrumvirate." The designer could then offer his or her feedback on what the play needs and whether practical or exploratory design work would be more helpful. However, that decision also should remain with the playwright, aided by the director and dramaturg, with consideration for the needs of the play. As Flaherty says, "It's not about being fair. It's about art."

These questions suggest some implications for training workshop participants. As Jan Selman said in her article on workshops: "We need good play workshops in this country. We need artists who are trained in the process. Acting programmes, universities, professional associations, funding bodies, workshop organizations, and experienced professionals all have parts to play in the development of sounder, more effective workshopping." The information in this thesis could be used as a training tool for developing an appropriate attitude towards new work, as well as for a range of skills and attitudes described herein. For the players in their individual roles, and as team members, the descriptions of skills and attitudes could be seen as a standard for training to achieve.

Many of the participants place great emphasis on the need to train actors specifically to do workshops. Moher notes that, "Actors aren't encouraged to be proactive, but to learn [passively], especially in University. Students should be trained to do new plays -- fifty percent of actors will do new plays." Put another way, one could argue that all actors will do new plays fifty percent of the time. Pearson suggests particular training in flexibility: "Flexibility: the ability to take one line of text and do thirty different things with it, with thirty different actions, and thirty different intentions is the kind of training required." Haynes adds, "Training can be useful because you've been exposed to the mechanics of script analysis." Training programs can include activities like that done to train BFA actors at the University of Alberta. A group of BFA actors worked on the development of Frank Moher's play Blue Trumpeter through a series of workshops to production. In addition to Moher, Selman and Van Heyst also worked on the project as director/dramaturg and designer respectively.

However, Elliott Hayes warns against a "'masterpiece mentality'" in which "'masterpieces'" are worth producing or watching; other plays "'need work.'" He believes that a "generation of Canadian actors has learned how to 'work' on a new script, not how to perform one; they take for granted that it will be revised and rewritten." (36) The actor, and all the other players, need to find a balance between working on improving new plays and respecting and performing new plays.

As Moher indicates, workshops can be a good tool to help a young writer develop his or her craft, but Potter generally prefers not to use workshops, especially non-production workshops, as a basic training device for the playwright. He believes that producing plays gives the playwright the experience he or she needs in order to develop:

> With the limited dollars we have in the theatre today, I'm not as keen on those kinds of things [non-production workshops] in the professional theatre. I think that they can have a role depending on your community. If you don't have many playwrights and you're trying to build up that basic skill level, they can probably do a lot quickly. But would the playwright develop more quickly, though, if you gave them $300 dollars and said 'direct your own play on the Fringe?' I think here, now, in Edmonton, our theatre tends to function on developing plays that we're very interested in producing. We don't commit to producing, but we're going to be pretty interested in producing, or we don't workshop them. (Potter)

Economics are also behind Flaherty's main concerns about the workshop process. She believes that limited funding has created most of the "systemic bias" in the workshop, especially towards naturalism or "easily understood and recognized forms." ("Table Stakes" 28-9) Theatres do not have the resources to risk creating new possibly labour-intensive forms with less certainty of producing a successful product that will have a proven audience. This necessity to produce a "commodity" or a tangible script in the workshop has heightened the elevation of words rather than theatre events:

> It makes sense that if you have the mould for a 1991 Subaru car door and the material to make this door and the people who know how to pour the material into the mould and recover it from the mould, you are very likely to end up with a 1991 Subaru car door. The only variable might be the colour. ("Table Stakes" 29)

However, her standard model does not include budgeting for a designer in the process, so workshops in Edmonton that do include a designer may perhaps alter the make and model, at least of the door.

Economics also affect personal agendas, according to Flaherty:

> "If you get hired to do a workshop, your investment in the work is dictated by your own sense of professionalism and your personal agenda, not by the work....Actors want to be cast in the actual production; directors want a play appropriate for next year's season and a contract to direct it; dramaturges want to enhance their professional credentials so they continue to work; playwrights want their plays produced. ("Table Stakes" 29)

Such underlying agendas can be responsible for many of the unspoken/unknown biases that can hinder a workshop.

Potter and Mann in particular dwell on the problems of the scheduled season forcing new work on stage before it is ready. Potter notes that theatres have to take risks, but generally look for drafts that will at least be adequate. He cites Urjo Kareda's suggestion that it takes two years to develop a play, but adds that he does not believe in a formula. It depends on the condition of the play and his faith in the playwright. Mann also worries about plays being rushed into production before they are ready. He thinks that in a first productions, which is often the only production, the choice can be between continuing the workshop development work in rehearsal and ending up with a better play, or stopping development by working on the play "as is" and ending up with a more polished production.

Many, including Flaherty, Moher, Grieve, Potter, Heatley, and Robert Benedetti, stress the need for sufficient resources in the theatre in order to do the research and development that will generate new and exciting plays and forms. "If big corporate business spent as little on research and development as we do in the theatre, they'd go bankrupt." ("Directors' Colloquium" 12) However, Moher cautions against too much R & D as well as too little. In addition, Moher does not believe, despite his own use of the workshop, that this is necessarily the best development process:

> "[We need to] invent our own process, rather than adopting models such as the O'Neill in America or Robert Lepage's method. We will be a mature culture when we create our own methods. The Fringe is this to some extent [but it's] not intended for grown-ups. [It's] great for artists in the early stages of their development, but less so for mature artists." (Moher)

Mann stresses a missing step in the workshop-to-production development process. Although Elliott Hayes believes a good workshop "can function like an out-of-town try-out without the pressure," (36) Mann thinks that a workshop can be a first step to the intermediate out-of-town try-out stage in development, but not an equivalent:

> I think that our process of going from workshopping and dramaturgy to production is somehow incomplete, and I'm not sure what the step is that's missing. Quite often what the playwright learns the most from is seeing that thing up there the first time and then if they have the chance to rewrite....[The workshop] isn't a substitute, it's maybe a first step but we don't ever have that trial run. Maybe what they do at ATP is the closest. I think the ideal would probably be to do a limited production of a play in one season. Maybe run a week or a few days, take it away, work on it again and then do your full production. By then hopefully you don't have to do too much dramaturgical work having seen it up once. (Mann)

Once again funding in large part determines that such limited productions are difficult to accomplish. Workshop/festivals like ATP are a response to limited funding, allowing a smaller number of people to work on a larger body of plays. In addition, they provide more of a showcase for plays and are closer to an actual production experience for playwrights. However, former artistic director for ATP Allen McInnis warns that the "next step from the workshopping syndrome is the festival syndrome." ("Directors' Colloquium" 12) In any case, ATP's playRites developed in response to a knowledge of the previous stand-alone workshop structure and to finding it inadequate.

Awareness of the old organizational structures allowed for the creation of a new structure by exceeding and manipulating the established structure. Players in the process, such as Pearson and Skelton, already have ideas for manipulations based on their experience and knowledge of the traditional structure. "If one could afford to do it, it would be fascinating I think to have two completely different casts workshop the same play, and then to ultimately have them read the play for each other." (Pearson) "What may be interesting is to have a staged [or public] reading before the workshop starts, because then you learn something and you can work on it right away." (Skelton) Van Heyst mentions a manipulation fairly commonly practiced of coming to the workshop with just an idea rather than a draft and working from there. Heatley, in response to the need both to continue developing scripts in rehearsal and to freeze development in a rehearsal draft in order to achieve a polished production, often combines workshop and rehearsal:

> Stephen likes having something like thirty days between the third and fourth day of rehearsal. It gives everybody a chance to start to raise the questions. I think people approach things with a very different point of view when they know they're going to be on stage saying the lines in three weeks. They go away and they have stuff to ruminate about, to have stuff sink in. And I have stuff that I can deal with and [time] to do a production draft, to do a rehearsal draft because of the things that have been raised. (Massing)

This is an artificial manipulation, but one that works, and after all, workshops are artifices designed to encourage greater artifice from playwrights.

There is no need for a phobia about the artifice of setting "rules" in the workshop, provided the players develop a healthy attitude about rules. Rules are meant to be established, known, and broken. In the workshop in particular, "rules" are meant as guidelines to foster, not hinder, creation. Such ground rules are available for use, but need not necessarily be followed. The players require a balance between completely free play and structured play within the game.

The potential for the creation of new structures is particularly evident at this time in Edmonton. Since my interviews, Ben Henderson, also an experienced NPD professional in Alberta, has taken over Theatre Network, David Mann has taken over Workshop West, and D.D. Kugler, one of Canada's nationally known dramaturgs, has become the artistic director of Northern Light Theatre. Perhaps this "snapshot" of the old structure could assist them in making changes. Like Moher's playwright in the workshop, readers of this thesis might sift through the information and find at least twenty percent useful.

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APPENDIX -- BIOGRAPHIES

DEFELICE, JIM
Jim DeFelice has been teaching at the University of Alberta since 1969. He trained at Northeastern University (Boston), Tufts University in Massachusetts, and Indiana University. He received his MA from Tufts University. He has a wealth of experience in teaching, directing, and acting for the theatre as well as a strong interest in film. He received an Etrog for his screenplay for the film Why Shoot the Teacher. He has been working in NPD since 1968 and since 1973 in Edmonton. He has worked primarily as a dramaturg, director, or director/dramaturg, but also as a playwright and actor, on over 15 new play productions and over 25 workshops in Edmonton, and 5 new play productions and workshops elsewhere. His NPD experiences include Sawbones Memorial by Ken Mitchell, This is Gerald by Kelly Rebar, and Down for the Weekend and Prairie Report by Frank Moher.

ERTMAN, MORRIS
Morris Ertman received a BA in Religion from North American Baptists' University and an MFA in Design from the University of Alberta. He has designed over 100 and directed over 30 productions. He has also designed for opera. He has worked primarily as a designer, but also as a director in the NPD process in Edmonton for over 10 years. During that time he has been involved in over 30 new play productions and 20 workshops in Edmonton, and involved in 10 new play productions and 3 workshops elsewhere. His NPD experiences include The Glorious Twelfth by Ray Storey, and Odd Jobs and Sliding For Home by Frank Moher.

FLAHERTY, KATHLEEN
Kathleen Flaherty received a BA in Political Science from the University of Alberta and a BFA in Drama and MFA in Directing from the University of Calgary. She has directed, dramaturged, or directed/dramaturged over 40 productions and over 50 workshops, primarily in Eastern Canada. She has worked primarily as a director, dramaturg, or director/dramaturg, but also as a playwright and actor in the workshop process. Flaherty has been working in NPD for over 15 years, which include the last 4 years in Edmonton. She has been involved in over 20 new play productions and 50 workshops elsewhere, as well as 3 new play productions and 5 workshops in Edmonton. Her NPD experiences include Scientific Americans by John Mighton, Thirteen Hands by Carol Shields, and Harvest Moon Rising by Leslie Arden and Peggy Sample. Flaherty currently works as a producer of CBC Radio Drama in Edmonton.

GRIEVE, LIZ
Liz Grieve trained at the University of Alberta, where she

received a BA in Drama and where she has currently returned to finish an MA thesis in Drama. Grieve worked as a dramaturg in NPD in Edmonton from 1981 to 1988 at Theatre Network, Nexus Theatre, and Northern Light Theatre. During that time, she worked on over 30 new play productions and workshops. Her NPD experiences include working with Michael Mackinley on Walt and Roy and other plays, as well as working with Paul Morgan Donald, Ray Storey, and Conni Massing.

HAYNES, BLAIR
Blair Haynes trained at the University of Alberta where he received a BFA in Acting with distinction and an MFA in Directing. He has acted in 63 productions across Canada during 16 years as a professional. He was a part of the Workshop West Playmaking Ensemble in 1985 as an actor, director, and dramaturg. Haynes has worked primarily as an actor, but also as a director, as a dramaturg, and as a playwright, in the workshop process. He has been working in NPD in Edmonton for over 15 years, involved in over 20 new play productions and over 30 workshops. He has also been involved in 5 new play productions and workshops elsewhere. His NPD experiences include Walt and Roy by Michael D.C. MacKinley, The Rich Man by Joanne Osborne and Gerry Potter, and Barbarians by Blake Brooker.

HEATLEY, STEPHEN
Stephen Heatley received a BA in Drama and English from Brock University and an MFA in Directing from the University of Alberta. He was Artistic Director at Theatre Network from 1981 to 1993 where he was a leading figure in NPD in Edmonton. He has worked on over 30 new play productions and many more workshops in Edmonton and 5 new play productions elsewhere. He has worked primarily as a director or director/dramaturg, but also as a playwright and as an actor in the workshop process. His NPD experiences include Castrato by Greg Nelson, The Last Bus by Ray Storey, The Third Ascent by Frank Moher, and The Mail Order Bride by Robert Clinton.

HINTON, JANET
Janet Hinton received a BA in Drama from Queen's University (Kingston) and an MFA in Playwriting from the University of Alberta. Her plays include Delicate State Disturbed, Piano Trio, The Canterbury Tales, More Canterbury Tales, and Moonreachers. She has also worked as a dramaturg. She has been involved in NPD for over 10 years in Edmonton and for more than 5 years elsewhere. She has been involved in 8 new play productions and over 20 workshops in Edmonton, and 2 new play productions and 5 workshops elsewhere. She has primarily been involved as a playwright, but also as a dramaturg and director in the workshop process. Her NPD

experiences include her plays Delicate State Disturbed, Piano Trio, and Moonreachers.

MANN, DAVID
David Mann trained in drama at the University of Lethbridge. He also was a part of the Banff Centre Master Class in 1983. He has taught at the University of Alberta. Mann has acted in over 60 productions and has also acted in film, television, and radio, and directed over 10 productions. He has worked in NPD in Edmonton for over 15 years. He has been involved in over 12 collectives at Catalyst Theatre and over 15 new play productions and over 40 workshops in Edmonton. Elsewhere, he has been involved in 5 new play productions and over 10 workshops. He has primarily been an actor and, more recently, a director, but he has also been a dramaturg and co-playwright in the workshop process. His NPD experiences include Moonreachers by Janet Hinton, The Rich Man by Joanne Osborne and Gerry Potter, and The Third Ascent and Odd Jobs by Frank Moher. Currently Mann is Artistic Director of Workshop West.

MASSING, CONNI
Conni Massing trained at the University of Alberta where she received a BA in Drama and an MFA in Playwriting. She has taught playwriting at the University of Alberta. Her plays include Nora at Daybreak, Saturday Night Special, Welcome to Theatre Fabulous (with Ed Connell and Stephen Heatley), Gravel Run, SkyGeezers, Dustsluts, and Aberhart Summer. She has also written for television and film and worked as a dramaturg. She has worked primarily as a playwright or dramaturg, but also as an actor and as a director in the NPD process in Edmonton since 1980. Massing has been involved in over 25 new play productions and workshops in Edmonton, and 5 elsewhere. Her NPD experiences include her plays Nora at Daybreak, Gravel Run, and SkyGeezers.

MOHER, FRANK
Frank Moher studied fiction and playwriting at the University of Alberta, the Banff Centre, and the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theatre Centre. He taught playwriting at the University of Alberta. In Edmonton, he has been playwright-in-residence at Theatre Network, Workshop West, Northern Light Theatre. His plays include Blue Trumpeter, The Third Ascent, Sliding For Home, Odd Jobs, Prairie Report, Kidnapping the Bride, and Farewell. Moher has also written for film, television, and radio. He has also worked as a dramaturg, literary manager, and publicist. He worked at Theatre 3 where he was active in bringing the workshop to Edmonton. He has been working in NPD for 20 years which include 11 years in Edmonton and a further ongoing association with Edmonton. In Edmonton he has been involved in over 15 new play productions and over 50 workshops.

Elsewhere, he has also been involved in over 15 new play productions and over 20 workshops. He has worked primarily as a playwright and dramaturg, but also as a director and actor in the workshop process. His NPD experiences include Checkin' Out by Kelly Rebar, Prairie Church of Buster Galloway by Lyle Victor Albert, Chicken Coop Girl by Robert Pearce, and his own plays. Moher currently lives and writes on Gabriola Island in British Columbia.

NELSON, GREG
Greg Nelson received a BA in Drama from the University of Saskatchewan and an MFA in Playwriting from the University of Alberta. His plays include Flight of the Living Dog, Sydney, Castrato winner of the Sterling award for Outstanding New Play, The Cure, and Spirit Wrestler. He has been involved in NPD for 7 years which include three years in Edmonton. During that time, he has been involved in 6 new play productions in Edmonton and 6 elsewhere. He has also been involved in 3 workshops in Edmonton and 9 elsewhere, primarily as a playwright, but also as an actor. His NPD experiences include workshops on his plays Spirit Wrestler, Castrato, and The Cure. Nelson currently lives and writes in Saskatoon.

PEARSON, VAL
Val Pearson received a BEd majoring in Drama with a minor in Music from the University of Calgary. She taught high school drama in Calgary for 10 years before becoming a full-time professional actor and appearing in over 60 productions across Canada. She has been working as an actor, and sometimes musical director, in NPD for over 10 years, which include over 5 years in Edmonton. In Edmonton, she has been involved in 8 new play productions and 10 workshops, while elsewhere, she has been involved in 12 new play productions and 10 workshops. Her NPD experiences include Gravel Run by Conni Massing, Odd Jobs by Frank Moher, Remember by Linda Zwicker, and New World by John Murrell.

POTTER, GERRY
Gerry Potter received a BA in English from Carleton University and an MFA in Directing from the University of Alberta. In 1986 he worked as an observer with the Berliner Ensemble, the Circle Repertory Company, Joint Stock Theatre, and Theatre du Soleil. He has directed 48 productions at Workshop West which he founded in 1978, and where he remained as Artistic Director until 1994. He has been a dramaturg or director/dramaturg in over 60 workshops and 25 productions. He has been a leading figure in NPD in Edmonton since 1978, primarily as a director, dramaturg, or director/dramaturg, but also as a playwright, actor, and designer. He was a part of the Workshop West Playmaking Ensemble in 1985 as an actor, writer, director, and

dramaturg. In Edmonton, he has been involved in over 30 new play productions and over 70 workshops. Elsewhere, he has worked on 5 new play productions and over 10 workshops. His NPD experiences include *The Rich Man* by Joanne Osborne and Gerry Potter, and *Sliding for Home*, *Prairie Report*, and *Farewell*, all by Frank Moher.

SELMAN, JAN

Jan Selman received a BFA in Drama from the University of Victoria and an MFA in Directing from the University of Alberta. She taught at the Department of Drama at the University of Alberta from 1988 to 1994. Currently she is teaching in the Department of Theatre and Film at the University of British Columbia. She has worked on over 50 productions as a director, both freelance and as Artistic Director of Catalyst Theatre in Edmonton. Additionally, her extensive work in Popular Theatre includes guiding over 15 collective creations. Selman was active in NPD in Edmonton as a director and/or dramaturg from 1978 to 1994. During this time, she worked on over 20 new play productions and workshops. Her NPD experiences include *Blue Trumpeter* and *Odd Jobs* by Frank Moher, *Delicate State Disturbed* and *Piano Trio* by Janet Hinton, and *Magpie* by Kit Brennan.

SKELTON, DAVID

David Skelton received a BA in English Literature and Cultural Studies from Trent University and an MFA in Design from the University of Alberta. He has designed over 100 productions in Edmonton and across Canada since 1983. He has also directed 8 productions. Currently, he is a member of Theatre of the New Heart. Skelton has been involved in NPD in Edmonton since 1983. During that time, he also worked in NPD elsewhere. In Edmonton, he has been involved as a designer in over 30 new play productions and over 15 workshops, while elsewhere he has worked as a designer on over 20 new play productions and on 6 workshops. His NPD experiences include *Shimmering Garden* by collaborative effort at Theatre of the New Heart -- guided by Skelton, *Requiem* by Floyd Favel, and *Shakespeare's Dog* adapted by Blair Haynes and co-directed by Gerry Potter.

STOREY, RAY

Ray Storey has been writing professionally since the production of *Country Chorale* at Theatre Network in 1981. His plays include *Country Chorale* (with John Roby), *The Last Bus*, *Angel of Death*, *Something in the Wind*, *Girls in the Gang*, *The Glorious Twelfth*, *Saints and Apostles*, *Adventures in Turning Forty*, and *South of China*. His plays have been produced across Canada. Storey has also written for film, television, and radio. He has been active in NPD in Edmonton for over 10 years and continues an ongoing association. He has worked primarily as a playwright, but also as a director, dramaturg, and actor in the workshop process. He often directs his own work in the workshop and in production. He has been involved in over 20 new play productions and workshops in Edmonton and over 10 workshops and new play productions elsewhere. His NPD experiences include Walt and Roy by Michael D.C. MacKinley and many of his own plays.

VAN HEYST, DANIEL
Daniel Van Heyst trained at the University of Alberta where he received both a BFA and an MFA in Design. He has worked as a designer on over 90 productions. From 1982 to 1990 he was resident designer at Theatre Network where he helped develop a new play process that incorporates visual elements in the early stages of play development. As a designer, he has worked on over 40 new play productions and over 20 workshops in Edmonton and 5 new play productions elsewhere. His NPD experiences include Blue Trumpeter and The Third Ascent by Frank Moher, Something in the Wind by Ray Storey, and Your Wildest Dreams by Marianne Copithorne and Murray McCune. Van Heyst currently also works as an instructor in Drama at King's University College in Edmonton.